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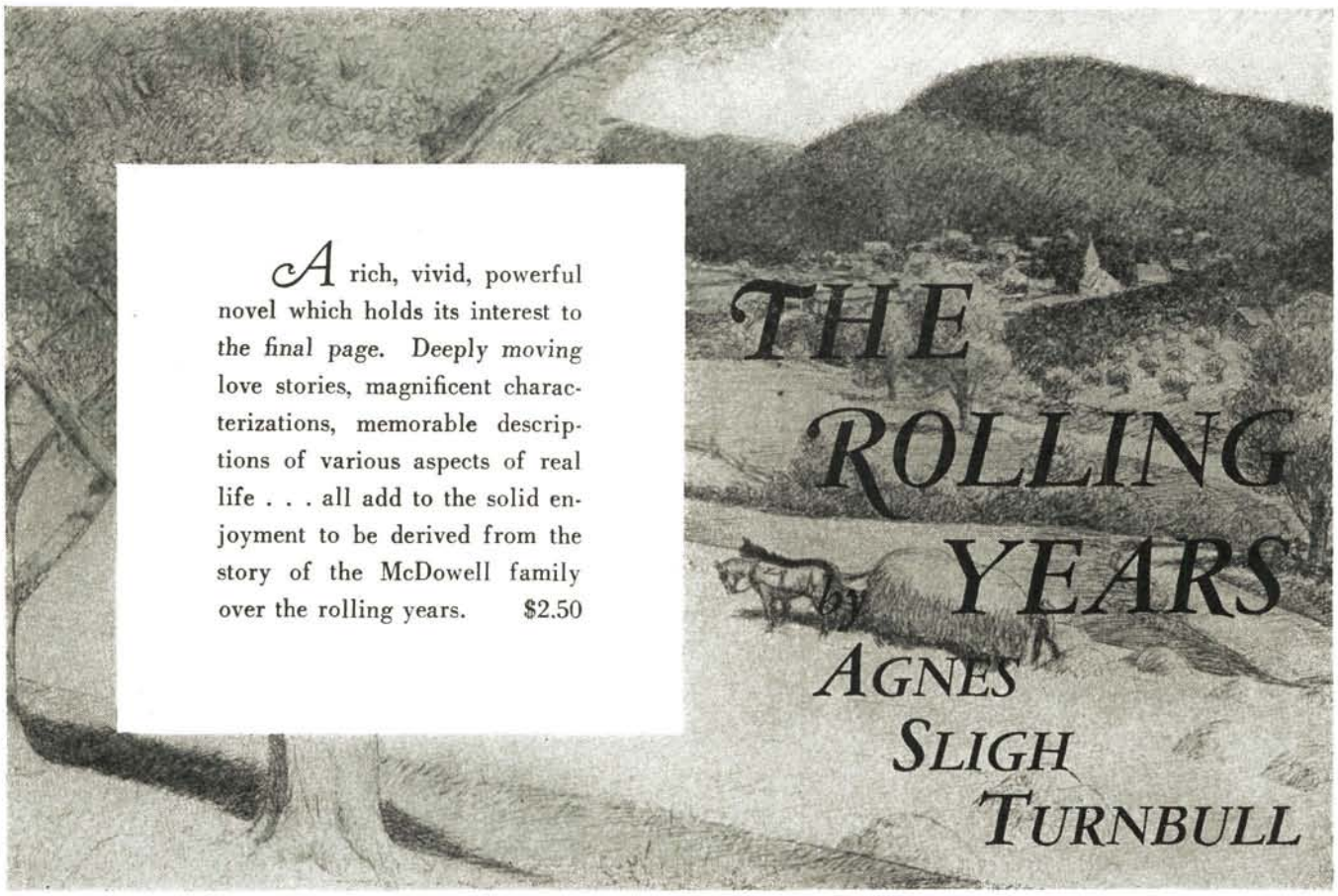

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Robert Herrick: Minister of Grace

BY LLEWELYN POWYS

ALL critics agree that Robert Herrick has written some of the most graceful lyrics to be found in the English language, but the same consensus of opinion does not extend to the poet's character or outlook upon life. Conventional people have always been inclined to put aside his "unbaptized rhymes" as mere literary exercises written to please Saint Ben of "the mountain belly and the rocky face," and having little to do with the "real" Herrick—the devout cavalier parson, whose political persecutions were so sound, and whose verses in Noble Numbers testify to his having been so wholesome an expositor of Church of England doctrines.

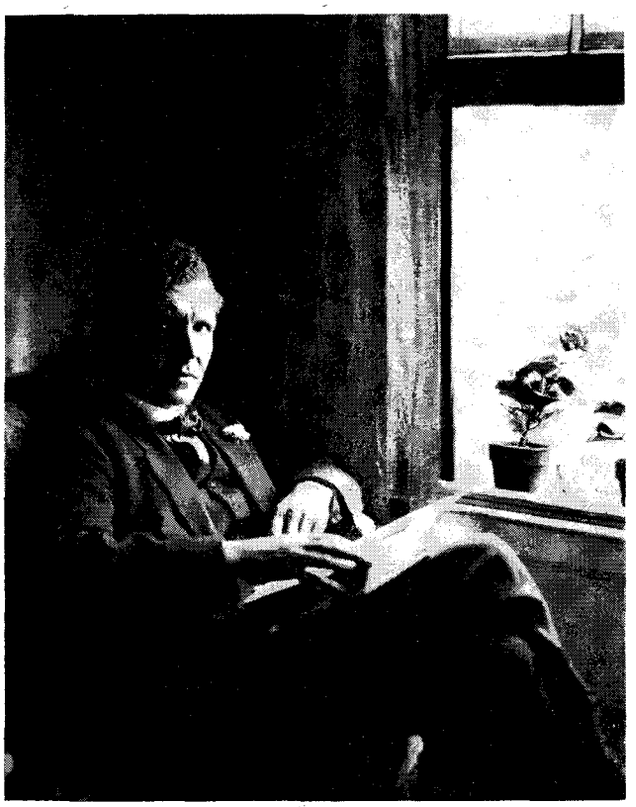
To his Book's end this last line
he'd have plac't,
Jocond his Muse was; but his
Life was chast.

Some support may perhaps be found for this apologia from the fact that Herrick's playful prayers and half serious litanies were remembered in the cottages of Devonshire for more than a hundred years after his death. In the year 1809 a curious visitor questioned the village people of Dean Prior about their former parson and was astonished to discover that there was living an old woman of over ninety who could recite without a trip the religious hymn "To his Angrie God" which opens with the truly terrifying lines,

Through all the night
Thou dost me fright.

This story surely would seem to suggest that Herrick's parish duties had not been neglected and that his congregation had been duly impressed by his devotional versifications, seeing that it was their own earthen pot heads which for a period preserved the literary immortality of their clergyman.

"Hesperides" was published a little before King Charles was beheaded and was then forgotten until rediscovered by a certain Mr. Nichols at the end of the eighteenth century. The frontispiece of the original edition is embellished with the head of the author engraved by William Marshall. It is very well known, and



LLEWELYN POWYS

in all probability represents a passing good likeness, for Marshall had already done a similar service for Bacon, Donne, and Milton. Of a Roman cast, heavy and gross, it is difficult to believe that the profile on the faded page could possibly represent the countenance of the poet. The picture, however, helps us to understand how the coarser verses in "Hesperides" came to be written, those satirical quatrains and clever couplets, composed after the manner of Martial, smelling more of sack than the lamp and which are apt to disgust even those writers who affect a preference for broad and honest speech.

Wither'd with yeares, and bed-rid
Mumma lyes;
Dry-rosted all, but raw yet in her eyes.

Or again:

Ralph pares his nayles, his warts, his
cornes and Ralph
In sev'rall tills, and boxes keepes 'em
safe;
Instead of Harts-horne (if he speakes
the troth)
To make a lustie-gellie for his broth.

The fact is that Herrick was not the pious George Herbert-like country cavalier parson that the orthodox wish to believe him to have been, nor on the other hand was he intent upon directing the minds of his readers to the contemplation of human scurf and nothing else. He was religious as are those who venerate the tradition and usages of antiquity, but at the same time upon occasions he could display a pagan heartlessness to suffering and a pagan contempt for all that is uncomely or old.

The vigor of his "brutish sting," symbolized by his prodigious nose in the picture, was powerful enough (and this is a strange anomaly) to refine rather than to roughen his spirit, rendering his fancy light and volatile as a sycamore seed, and curing him of that blinkered use and wont stare with which almost all men regard women, a use and a wont stare that sees "these cattle" either as harlots or as faithful, domesticated housewives, but seldom as creatures in petticoats with the incomparable faces of angels, the pressure of whose pretty insteps can shake "Quarelets of pearls" from every grass blade and transform the fallen beech leaves of October to discs of finest gold.

This Robin Hood the second owed homage to two worlds—the actual world of his day-by-day activities where he lived as a favored bachelor priest with Prudence Baldwin to cook for but not "to cocker his appetite" in the old vicarage of Dean Prior; and the world of his imagination, the enchanted Forest of Arden, a kind of land of Shee that any Jacobean Miss could in an instant conjure up for

Next Week

THE WAY OF A TRANSGRESSOR
By NEGLEY FARSON
Reviewed by Frank H. Simonds
(The last criticism written for *The Saturday Review* by Mr. Simonds before his death)

THE HURRICANE
By CHARLES NORDHOFF and JAMES NORMAN HALL
Reviewed by Christopher Morley

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him. These two worlds, both of them deeply poetical, acted as foils the one to the other.

Although in Herrick's time a certain amount of weaving was done at Dean Prior, the village for the most part supported itself as it does today from the produce of its orchards and pasture lands. It is situated five miles from Totnes in the fertile valley of the Dart with the tors of the moor clearly visible from its churchyard. In the seventeenth century the only approach to the vicarage was along a winding, leafy lane. At the end of this Midsummer-Eve-Lane, deep embowered amid forests of apple trees, were the Church glebe lands of ninety and more acres irrigated by "leats" from the stream called Dean Burn. It was in these fat acres that Herrick's "great-ey'd kine" were to be seen grazing, and in the uplands nearer the moor, his sheep.

Here thou behold'st thy large sleek Neat
Unto the Dew-laps up in meat.

These seen, thou go'st to view thy flocks
Of sheep, (safe from the Wolfe and Fox)
And find'st their bellies there as full
Of short sweet grasse, as backs with wool.

In one of his most winning poems entitled "A thanksgiving to God for his house," he has with pretty artifice presented an unforgettable picture of the Arcadian husbandry of his dwelling.

Low is my porch, as is my Fate
Both void of state;
And yet the threshold of my doore
Is worn by 'th poore

Lord, I confess, too, when I dine,
The pulse is Thine,
And all those other Bits, that bee
There placed by Thee,
The worts, the Purslain, and the Messe
Of water-cresse

Like as my Parlor, so my Hall
—And Kitchin's small:
A little Butterie, and there-in
A little Byn.

This then was the solid, sensible background of his life in Devonshire. So solid, indeed, was the structure of the old Vicarage that much of it still stands today and that it might be conceivably possible for a painstaking mason, on any Saturday afternoon of the present year, to exhume from its crannied sepulchre in the kitchen wall the skeleton, parched and brittle, of one of the many crickets which had used to act "the music of the feast" to Herrick as, with his old friend Jacky Wickes by a bright fire in the chimney nook, he read of the Trojan war.

When the faire Hellen, from her eyes,
Shot forth her loving sorceries:
At which I'll reare
Mine aged limbs above my chaire:
And hearing it,
Flutter and crow, as in a fit
Of fresh concupiscence, and cry,
No Lust there's like to poetry.

ROBERT HERRICK
From William Marshall's engraving (1647)

Season followed season as the broken times approached rolling the poet in chariots of blossom towards the oblivion he dreaded. Each year when the Hock-Cart brought the last sheaf home to Sir Edward Giles's barton grange Herrick would be following behind with the revellers, and he would be present also to christen the trees with "lambs-wool" from the wassail bowl, leaving the warmth of the parlor to perform this ancient twelfth night obligation under the orchard stars: devising on his return "mirth to dulcet man's miseries," as eager as the elected King and Queen to play at Fox-in-the-hole. For as he himself admits he was a confirmed bachelor:

Ile hug, Ile kisse, Ile play,
And Cock-like Hens Ile tread:
And sport it any way;
But in The Bridall Bed.

But most blithe of all would he be at that time of the year when little children begin to drop violets on the halter-paths, and the daffodils, one behind the other, open their yellow separate trumpets under sheltered walls. Then as the days lengthened, with rooks cawing in the elm tree tops, and blackbirds each night at a later hour whistling in the hedges, the mere glimpse of Mistress Julia, of Mistress Elizabeth Wheeler, of Mistress Amy Potter, of Mistress Lettice Yarde, would scatter all his thoughts, instantly admitting him to his "pipkin paradise"—a paradise real and unreal, where sights, and sounds, and smells, suffered a strange heightening, and where tansy cakes tasted like the bread of Adonis, and the sense of touch was beyond words swooning sweet. It was then that this black-headed curly locks was tamed of his bestialities, was rendered "ayrie, active to be born, like Iphyclus, upon the tops of corn," able to change the lust of the goat into a grace as light and delicate as that of butterflies trembling in ecstasy at the end of a dry, grassy penant. Was it perhaps on some lazy Sunday afternoon towards the end of August that Julia was subjected to the depredations of two filching snatch thieves as she lay amongst the fallen fruit, warm and wasp-eaten, in the long grass of the lower Vicarage orchard?

As *Julia* once a-slumb'rng lay,
It chanc't a Bea did flie that way,
(After a dew, or dew-like shower)
To tipple freely in a flower.
For some rich flower, he took the lip
Of *Julia*, and began to sip;
I thought I might there take a taste,
When so much sirrop ran at waste.

From chin to ankle there was no part of a young girl's body that did not make Herrick mad with mortal longings. Each cool shadow, lying so softly on the flesh of these fair creatures, was an irresistible enticement to him to dangle his soul upon the sea-saw of desire. Every inch of a girl's body was to him worshipful and charged with a peculiar lustre. He looks passionately upon it in its plain carnality, striving to recreate it in an airy sort, out of spring flowers, as Welsh mythology teaches us happened to the maiden Blodduwed. These lively, lovely girls, shy and liquid-eyed as new born calves in his own strawy cowshed, wayward as the dapple deer half hidden in the ferns of Sir Edward Gile's Park, full of duplicity as nesting ploughland lapwings, could in a trice translate him body and soul into a horse-shoe fairy world substantial enough for treading, and for ravishing sensations, and yet ethereal too, as though belonging to some old fabled country of Master Malory's invention where nothing had been mapped out but "damaskt medowes," shining rivers, and pavilions of chivalry! These ladies of dainty dalliance fluttered all day long before his eyes like wanton fuchsia flowers, beyond all measure provocative, with their uptilted petal frocks; so that when he lay down at night he remained under the same glamour bewildered with the fantasy prospect of an exacting venery. There never has lived a poet who has more sanely and yet more gaily expressed the pretty rewards and pastimes of true love.

If I kissed Anthea's breast
Then I smell the Phenix nest;

And how delicate is his poem addressed to the nipples on Julia's breast.

Have ye beheld (with much delight)
A red-Rose peeping through a white?
Or else a Cherrie (double grac't)
Within a Lillie? Center plac't?

Herrick's sensuality is of a complexion so unabashed and generous that without effort he attains to that high state of heroical love passion when nothing that belongs to the body of the loved one can be anything but precious. This is a madness reserved for the true nurslings of Dionysus, fox children, whose blood moves like the tides every day of the week towards one central garden of Allah.

(*Continued on page* 12)

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A Missionary Mother

THE EXILE. By Pearl S. Buck. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock: a John Day book. 1936. $2.50.

Reviewed by SHERWOOD EDDY

PEARL BUCK has here given us not a novel but a realistic story unlike anything she has ever written. It is a vivid picture of her mother, a unique character study; remarkable psychological portraiture, intensely realistic and intimately human.

Mrs. Buck resolutely keeps herself out of the story. She is only a pair of eyes deeply seeing and then throwing on the reader's mental screen the moving picture of her own home in China. She traces the ancestry of her mother from the sturdy, independent Dutch stock of her grandfather, a small manufacturer, driven, with three hundred of his kinsmen from Holland during a period of religious persecution, to seek the freedom of the new world in a primitive log cabin settlement in Virginia. While the father was stolid Dutch, the mother was a sprightly little French maid of gaiety and love of worldly beauty and these two natures reappear in endless strife in the almost dual personality of Pearl Buck's mother.

These traits might have been harmonized but her divided nature was ever at war with the forbidding type of Puritan religion which conditioned her whole life. She was impulsive, full-blooded, likable, and human, with a certain joyous, pagan quality with its sensuous love of color, sound, and form, avid for full life. But her conception of religion did not lift and inspire; rather it placed intolerable burdens upon her sensitive conscience. She was a practical mystic, "struggling after God but never quite seeing Him." All her life she was seeking a sign and a satisfying experience which was never realized. She had in her a natural, healthy skepticism which forever perpetuated "the old struggle between her wholesome, robust nature and the imprint upon her tender conscience of the Puritan religion of her youth."

In this skepticism at the time of her mother's death she vows to become a missionary as the hardest thing she knows. And then, all her life as a veritable "exile" she indomitably builds her American home and garden of beauty in the heart of an alien Chinese city, with its filth and disease and appalling human need. She was an exile not only from her ideal of America but from many of the natural joys of life, in part from her own true self, and even from a satisfying relation to God. Yet with incredible heroism she battles on through recurring illness, disease, war, revolution, and famine, burying one by one four of her children, and many of her hopes and ambitions.

There are some vivid scenes of dramatic power as, in an inland Chinese city with her husband absent, when the superstitious mob comes to kill her and her children as "foreign devils," as the supposed cause of the terrible drought, she quickly spreads a feast and invites the murderers in to partake of her generous hospitality, hiding her blazing wrath and fear for her children under a friendly smile.

There is also a realistic and faithful picture given of the author's father. As a narrow fundamentalist "his life was wrapped up in a mystic union with God and with the souls of men." But he seemed to be utterly unaware of the men themselves, even of his own wife and children. Only once in his life, after he had been married for eighteen years, he noticed that his wife had "pretty brown eyes" and told her so, but the observation was never repeated. It is a pity that the book gives no picture either of missionary work or of satisfying dynamic religion at their best. But it is realistic psychological portraiture.

It will not be as popular as Mrs. Buck's novels. Many men will be too impatient to read it. It is preëminently a woman's book. Women who have known the tragedy of life will understand and love it. It is a moving picture of one woman's heart and home and life. It is a real book of fine literary quality interpreting one great human character.

Sherwood Eddy, former secretary of the Y. M. C. A. for Asia, is the author of "The Challenge of the East," and numerous other books on the Orient.

FROM THE JACKET DESIGN OF "THE EXILE"

Salute to Life

NEVER SAY DIE. By John Paton. New York: Longmans, Green & Company. 1936. $2.50.

Reviewed by MABEL S. ULRICH

IN John Paton's autobiography we have another "proletariat" story—but one with a difference. Here you will find not one trace of the bitterness and despair you have doubtless learned to expect, and perhaps to dread, in the modern literature of social struggle. This account of how a child born without benefit of "the kirk" in the back of a provision-shop in Aberdeen's slums, became at thirty-three a recognized leader of the Labor Party, is so crowded with humor, so permeated with zestful living, that it actually braces one's faith and kindles new hope in the changing order. Cheers, not tears, are due John Paton, and this reviewer put down the book sighing enviously, "There's something about a Scot—."

The man writes almost as vividly as he lives. His portraits of "Brucie," the rowdy, colorful grandmother whose kingdom extended from her shop all up and down "the rich and smelly life of Gordon St.," of her rum-sipping cronies, of the philosophic, inebriate grandfather, of the pathetic, deserted mother, all glow with vitality and are refreshingly lacking in even a trace of sentimentality. "It was rough, maybe," he says of his childhood, "but a healthy and colorful life." And so it was all along, even when at thirteen he went to work as a printer's apprentice at a salary of four shillings a week; from the presses to baking, then to peddling milk, and eventually to barbering, from which he graduated to the splendors of a beauty-shop and to the giving of permanent waves! To each of these trades he directs a fresh appraising eye. A barber-shop can never be just a barber-shop to the reader again. Through all these experiences both days and nights are colored by picturesque, even outlandish companions, by labor meetings which often as not end in lusty fights, with encounters with such outstanding

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leaders as Keir Hardie, Ramsay Macdonald, Snowden, James Maxton. He has found time for an astounding amount of reading, has joined the International Labor Party, has become a fighting pacifist. His political activities ruin his business. He turns the lock on his "beauty-shop" to become a professional agitator.

There the book ends. "Of the strange happenings both grave and gay with which the next fifteen years were crowded," Paton hints he may tell "in another story." This reviewer can hardly wait.

Disaster in a Blizzard

FIFTY ROADS TO TOWN. By Frederick Nebel. Boston: Little, Brown & Company. 1936. $2.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

I LIKED "Sleepers East," Mr. Nebel's first novel, and I like this one, his second. He writes with economy of means, makes his own pattern of a story, keeps you guessing, can create characters (none too subtle, but real) and his dialogue is right. Having read a good many straight-from-the-shoulder novels about ordinary people and warped people within the last several years, I shouldn't say that Mr. Nebel yet had any particular style by which you can distinguish him. Yet he very well knows his craft of writing of a group of people under circumstances that possess explosive elements. Another thing he has is humor—extra-dry. Charles, the nephew of the hotel manager in up-state Maine, is a case in point. So is the manager, George Hession. These characters have their deep humor, without being burlesqued, and Charles's last reverie at the end of the book is wholly satisfying.

But those are minor characters in the cast. The principals are the henpecked Edwin Henry, the fire-extinguisher salesman; Philip Prior who has gunned and is still gunning for Peter Nostrand who has had an affair with his wife; Henry's strong-minded wife, Edna; and Beryl the stranded torch-singer. The background is a blizzard in up-state Maine and the centre of things is that eventually crowded hostelry, the Outpost House, and also Dr. Bartran's camp. Let me say in passing that Mr. Nebel can describe a heavy snowfall in Maine to the queen's or anyone's else taste. But he has lived in a good many parts of the country, Maine among them.

He is interested in the destinies of people and how they are betrayed by their own queer weaknesses; also in how much chance has to do with what those who sit in judgment call right and wrong. I have an idea that Mr. Nebel can work on a larger scale. At any rate, so far he has constructed two good stories of groups of people. I could read a lot more about certain characters in this second novel. It is something to have whetted a jaded reader's appetite to that extent.

Kay Boyle's Stories

THE WHITE HORSES OF VIENNA. By Kay Boyle. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1936. $2.50.

Reviewed by N. L. ROTHMAN

IN each of her half dozen books Miss Boyle has afforded us one further glimpse of the brilliant literary temperament she shares with so few writers, since so few are as devoted as she to the pursuit of technics, to arduous chiselling of structure, to music and rhythm in prose. She is a consummate artist. It is hardly possible to say of her work that it grows, but rather that it changes, that it turns its attention from this theme to that, from one group of people to another, illumining what it touches. If this latest volume of short stories seems clearly to be her best, it is because there is evident a further extension of scope, a mastery of new ground, and because certain of these stories exhibit a warmth of emotion that seems to add one new arrow to her quiver.

KAY BOYLE

Actually the eighteen stories here contained present a fair index of Miss Boyle's powers, and from them alone one might chart the way she has come. Upon every page may be seen, first, the groundwork of her facility, a precise intimacy of knowledge conveyed with jealous, evocative understatement. Such things as the feel of a goat's hide, the beat of swans' wings, the sun on a glacier, or, less material, the reticence of pride, the locked force of hatred—these are transferred from her experience to our own in brief lightning flashes of inspired phrasing. Every word tells and none ever fails to hit the mark at the very center. Sometimes we feel that Miss Boyle has been content to stop at that, and at least three of the stories: "Peter Foxe," "Astronomer's Wife," and "Winter in Italy," with perhaps some others, are composed almost wholly of triumphant style. But her real triumphs are in those stories that make of this brilliance an instrument instead of an end product. When she has found a story fit for that instrument, the result is a small masterpiece. Such are "Count Lothar's Heart," "The White Horses of Vienna," "Life Being the Best," "White as Snow," and "Your Body is a Jewel Box." The last, in particular, will be long remembered for its power and its compassion, in its sure handling of a subject few have known how to touch, the psychopath. There is laughter in this book, too, in two short, shrewd sketches that capture whole the character of Negro and Irish folk-humor: "First Offense" and "Rondo at Carraroe." There should be mentioned, finally, four stories that deal alike with the fragile-spirited, those frustrated or thrust aside. It is here that understatement and intuition achieve their best ends, in making articulate and known to us those characters who can make no more showing in the robust prose more generally written today than they can in life. These stories are "Keep Your Pity," "Natives Don't Cry," "Major Alshuster," and "Dear Mr. Walrus." The volume exhibits much more variety of mood and subject than can be mentioned here. Each story darts off at a tangent from the last, each moving on another level, almost another world, each treated with a sureness of touch and understanding. Although we cannot deny to Miss Boyle the pleasures of the novel, it is the short story that seems the more perfect vehicle for those talents that are specially hers. For literary parallel to her short stories, we must look to the finely-wrought sonnet. In both cases, brevity is not a confining limitation, but the instrument of eloquence.

The Lost Speakers

(For Kay Boyle)

By ARCHIBALD MACLEISH

NEVER do sea birds sing
Never on earth's shingle
Any man—keeper of
Ocean-salted sheep—
Heard from the surge music

Neither were seamen used—
Light aloft in the east and the
Soft night wind increasing—
Wakening to have heard
Wild music of birds

The sea makes all things silent—
Even those that in isles and
Inland covert of thickets
Sing till the air is quick and the
Leaf stirs—creatures
Most formed for the sweet
Heartlessness of singing

Wings—not even the wing
Strongest of all things mortal
Gives to the mind before
Unending rings of horizon
Desire to sing

Their eyes
Changed: their work broken:
Many of ours who spoke in the
Inland years are dumb now
Seeing our march has come to the
Land's end and beyond is
Surf and the sea to wander

Restless at dusk they turn from the
Beach and the sea's churning
They do not look toward the sea
They are silent: their mouths move
secretly

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Chronicle Without Criticism

PROPAGANDA AND THE NEWS. By Will Irwin. New York: Whittlesey House. 1936. $2.75.

Reviewed by E. D. KENNEDY

HERE is a book which begins with a reference to the clay tablets of Assyria and Babylon as the first newspapers and concludes with a discussion of the many publicity departments supported by the Roosevelt Administration to supply the press with the New Deal handouts. In it Mr. Will Irwin has succeeded in writing a history of propaganda without at any point reaching an evaluation of it.

The first half of the book is a condensed and superficial history of journalism. It mentions Benjamin Day's founding of the *Sun* in 1833; James Gordon Bennett's founding of the *Herald* in 1835. It points out that the Morse telegraph, the Hoe press, the Mergenthaler linotype machine were great aids to journalism. It cites Eugene Field as first columnist, S. S. McClure as first syndicate-former, R. F. Outcalt as first comic page artist, Joseph Pulitzer and William Randolph Hearst as first exponents of the yellow press. Amidst a mass of information that must have appeared in print some hundreds of times, two refreshing—though hardly vital—facts stand out. Editors of the Civil War period never ran a headline across more than one column, and reported the assassination of Lincoln under a one-column head. The first color page in a New York newspaper (the *World*) pictured the celebration of High Mass in St. Patrick's cathedral.

Brown Bros.

WILL IRWIN

Leaping from a chapter on American press agents to a chapter on pre-war German propaganda, Mr. Irwin eventually reaches his subject. But he describes the mechanics of propaganda rather than its spirit. He tells how Germany made use of the Nauen wireless station to reach the outside world after the British navy had cut the oceanic cables. He reviews the stories of German atrocities—particularly the story about Belgian children with their hands cut off—and concludes that most of the stories were exaggerated and the hands story was a "plain, damned lie." He says that the Allies at first did not understand propaganda but eventually used it even more efficiently than the Germans. But he gives only one specific example of effective propaganda—and that was hardly propaganda in the strict sense of the word. In 1915, the British put on a costly and futile offensive at Neuve-Chappelle. Colonel C. A. Repington wrote an account of the battle for Lord Northcliffe's *Daily Mail*. He blamed the failure on the lack of high explosives. His story, according to Mr. Irwin, forced Premier Asquith to form a coalition cabinet and exploded the Kitchener myth.

Mr. Irwin consistently attributes to propaganda results of which propaganda was at best a minor cause. He suggests—without exactly stating—that propaganda demoralized the Italian army and led to the disaster at Caporetto in the fall of 1917. He refers to the fact that the German government transported Lenin and Trotzky across Germany to Russia in 1917 and repeats (though without endorsing) the story of how the Germans "plotted, inspired, and guided" the Communist revolution in November. Mr. Irwin says that he does not believe this story, but attributes the failure of Allied propaganda in the direction of keeping Russia in the war to Communist propaganda which gave the Russian people a "false, distorted picture of Western Civilization."

At no point does Mr. Irwin pause to study the propaganda which helped bring the United States into the World War. But he devotes two pages to describing a great propaganda stunt sponsored—after we had entered the war—by George Creel's Committee on Public Information. This demonstration took the form of a Loyalty Day parade. Foreign-born inhabitants of our larger cities marched through the streets wearing their native costumes but waving American flags. News-reel cameras photographed the processions, and the pictures were afterwards shown abroad. "So," says Mr. Irwin, "we were able to show in Sweden, Spain, Holland, and the Argentine—everywhere—news films of their own nationals in a state of active enthusiasm over America's war." Possibly the Loyalty Day pictures prevented Holland from declaring war on the Allies.

In discussing post-war propaganda Mr. Irwin points out, at some length, that the Italian government controls the Italian press, the German government controls the German press, and the Russian government controls the Russian press. Mr. Irwin's comments on Russia illustrate one of his blind spots—communism. (The other blind spot is Herbert Hoover.) Commenting on Russian schools, he says that Russian education is not so much a training for life as a preparation for propaganda—an odd distortion of the Soviet government's natural desire to bring up its young in the communist belief. He observes also, with the startling dogmatism of ignorance, that "the Russian is naturally a doctrinaire and prefers reasoning from a basis of airy philosophy to deduction from a basis of fact." Again, discussing Russian censorship of news from the outside world, he says, "The editor, himself an ardent communist and with the shadow of the knout falling always across his desk," colors the news to suit the communist cause. Surely if the editor is himself an ardent communist he might be expected to distort the news without benefit of shadows.

The concluding pages of Mr. Irwin's book—dealing with the presidential campaigns of 1928 and of 1932—most clearly illustrate his conception of propaganda and its power. Following the defeat of Alfred E. Smith in 1928, argues Mr. Irwin, John Raskob decided to destroy the reputation of Mr. Hoover so that Mr. Smith could be elected in 1932. Mr. Raskob financed the Democratic National Committee and installed Charles Michelson, of the defunct New York *World*, as its publicity agent. Whereupon Mr. Michelson hit upon the device of calling the Smoot-Hawley tariff the Hoover tariff, the Stock Market panic the Hoover panic, and otherwise personalizing the depression in terms of Mr. Hoover. Possibly Mr. Irwin, as Mr. Hoover's friend and biographer, can see no legitimate reason for the Roosevelt landslide in 1932. Even Mr. Irwin does not maintain that Mr. Michelson single-handed overthrew the Republican party. Yet he devotes some eight pages to the Raskob-Michelson machinations and concludes with the statement that "to say that clever propaganda alone defeated the Republicans in 1932 would be to stretch the facts . . . but it did turn defeat into a rout."

In handling a subject which demands a critical faculty, Mr. Irwin has brought to it only a narrative gift.

E. D. Kennedy is on the staff of Time.

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The Saturday Review
of Literature

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Reviewing

WE have published recently some interesting and provocative letters on reviewing good and bad, and many more have been received. The subject apparently arouses debate whenever it raises its head. Authors have a long-standing grievance against reviewers, often justified, and are quite as ready to attack a difference in taste as a misstatement of facts. Readers (American readers especially) are prone to believe that if a book is "panned" the reviewer must be spiteful or malicious. The American vice of tolerating the mediocre, which has historical causes not all of them discreditable, is responsible for an atmosphere which favors weakly good-natured reviewing. Readers are also ready to believe that an enthusiastic review is invariably the result of some "dirty deal" in a literary world which they conceive of as a logrollers' picnic.

What follows is not an attempt to enter into these controversies, nor indeed to offer either any new statement, or a criticism of the points of view offered by our correspondents. What has impressed us is the need of clearing up the vexed question as to what reviewing is and does, and particularly its difference from pure criticism. Let us define our terms first, and quarrel afterwards.

Reviewing should be critical, but criticism does not have to be reviewing, and seldom is. Criticism implies maturity of judgment, and a complete analysis of the relations between a book and its environment of circumstances and tradition. Time is an essential factor in criticism, time not merely to study the book to be criticized but to see its relationships with the reading community develop and harden. Criticism of strictly current books is of course possible, indeed it is extremely useful, but its scope is limited. You cannot measure and photograph a wriggling fish. Hence durable criticism has nearly always lagged behind the date of creation. What Whitman meant for his generation was in some respects more obvious when the "Leaves of Grass" was published than a half century later, but what he meant for American literature could not be anatomized until we had some perspective on his America.

Reviewing must inevitably take the risk of being *pro tem* criticism. It has the advantage of freshness of impression, the disadvantage of incomplete judgment. There is no sense in asking it to lay down absolute judgments. There is no use in expecting it to establish complete relationships. Its standards must inevitably be, not lower necessarily, but certainly much more flexible than those of pure criticism. It must regard success, for success means that a book has something in it for its own time—whether bad or good, promising or unpromising, it is often quite impossible at the moment to say. Are the "tendencies" introduced by Joyce destructive or constructive? Only the long view can tell. In the meantime the reviewer must write of "Ulysses" as a current phenomenon which he likes or dislikes, thinks good or bad, describes as best he can, and relates if he is able to contemporary imagination.

Hence the reviewer must inevitably deal with news as well as criticism. The critic has no obligations to take up this book or that. He is not reporting, he is analyzing. There is no news in his work unless it be his point of view. The book he chooses to analyze has become common property without his aid. It has settled down to its life in literature. Frequently he does not even have to describe it.

But one of the reviewer's first duties is to announce a book which no one has seen but its author and publisher. It is quite as important that he should describe it accurately, which means that he should thoroughly understand it, as that he should rank it as bad, better, good. It is not easy to describe a book,—harder perhaps to describe a work of the creative imagination than technical performance in economics or a lengthy biography. The reviewer must make it possible for the reader to know exactly what kind of a book he is going to read (or pass by) and how that book differs from others of its kind. In other words, his first task is definition—and is definition ever easy where the subject is as complex as even a simple book? His job does not end with a statement of facts, although they of course are important, he must also give an accurate impression, since his description must record what effect the book should have upon a reasonably intelligent reader. A wrong phrase, an unjustifiable interpretation, an undue injection of the author's own prejudices, may be as destructive as a misstatement of facts.

And this description is news. It is the very essence of the news of the book world, and it is the inescapable duty of the reviewer to get it and to give it to potential readers of a book.

After this criticism. And in saying that no reviewer can carry criticism to its ultimate, one does not discharge him from responsibility. It is true that some very readable books are not worth criticizing. The weight of critical analysis would crush their slight fabric which was created only to catch a passing interest. Nevertheless, with more considerable books, he must weigh, he has to value, he has to compare, as best he can, his book with its predecessors in kind. He is responsible for the tradition of which it is part. He is responsible for the merits he sees in it. He is responsible for stating its faults. He is responsible for his own prejudices, which he must discount as far as he is able. And if he has a social or critical philosophy by which he lives, he must state it or imply it in his criticism.

These remarks have just this bearing upon some of the letters we have been publishing. Reviewing is no job for amateurs. Reviewers cannot be condemned for their failure to settle the rank and merit of every new book by standards that hold good through the ages. You cannot use the theory of evolution to determine the merits or demerits of the squirrel in your elm tree or the dog at your heel. Reviewers cannot be attacked for their empirical attempts to place a book in its frame of reference. They have to try, they cannot be sure of success. Reviewers must be held strictly accountable for their picture of the book under review. We have a right to expect them to determine sincerely, and according to their best lights, whether the book is good for the age that produced it, or an indigestible lump, or poison. The work of the critic who is not a reviewer begins when theirs is finished, and comes to fruition only after a lapse of time permits a matured judgment. A critic can be both critic and reviewer, but seldom is. Each has a full-time job.

Ten Years Ago

In The Saturday Review for April 3, 1926, Louis Kronenberger reviewed "The Chip and the Block" by E. M. Delafield. He found the novel "*readable, joyous and richly humorous,*" although he admitted that Mrs. Delafield had "*written other books more distinguished both in art and truth.*" He concluded that she had "*contrived her story . . . and her satire for amusement.*"

E. M. Delafield is the pseudonym of Mrs. Arthur Paul Dashwood, whose maiden name of de la Pasture in this Anglicized form is now so well-known in both England and America. Her first novel, "Zella Sees Herself," was written during the war while she was working as a V.A.D.

Today

E. M. Delafield's new novel, "Faster! Faster!," a story of a domineering woman, is reviewed on page 10 of this issue.

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Letters to the Editor: *An Architect's Career; Black Controversy*

Louis Sullivan

SIR:—It is more than a month since you published Frank Lloyd Wright's rather unflattering review of my book on Louis Sullivan. I had not felt it necessary to challenge his views of my interpretation of Sullivan, nor have I felt warranted in taking up your space and your readers' time by a tedious justification of my own position. But during the past month it has become apparent to me that even friends and colleagues who disagree strongly with Mr. Wright's general opinion have been given pause by his imputations of inaccuracy as to facts, and at this belated time I should appreciate the use of your columns to give my sources on the one or two questions of fact raised by Mr. Wright's review.

Mr. Wright implied in a brief and pithy parenthesis that the Heath House in Chicago was not designed by Adler & Sullivan. My source for this is a paragraph in the "Inland Architect & News Record" of July, 1889, giving the name, address, and cost of the house, with the names of the architects, Adler & Sullivan. The house was also mentioned in the records of building permits of that year, and in a city directory of 1891. Possibly this information is unreliable, but one is inclined to give it more credence than unsupported memory. Mr. Wright also cited Adler's article on "The Influence of Steel Construction and of Plate Glass upon the Development of Modern Style" as demonstrating that Sullivan learned his theory of functionalism from Adler. Mr. Wright should have looked up the date of the Adler article in my bibliography; its appearance (1896) ten years after Sullivan's "Inspiration" address might have warned him against any rash conclusions, and a perusal of the article itself would have revealed that it is a *critique* of the doctrine "form follows function" rather than an exposition of it. These were, as I recall it, the only questions of fact raised in Mr. Wright's review; the other remarks were matters of opinion and do not merit consideration here.

HUGH MORRISON.

Department of Art and Archaeology,
Dartmouth College,
Hanover, N. H.

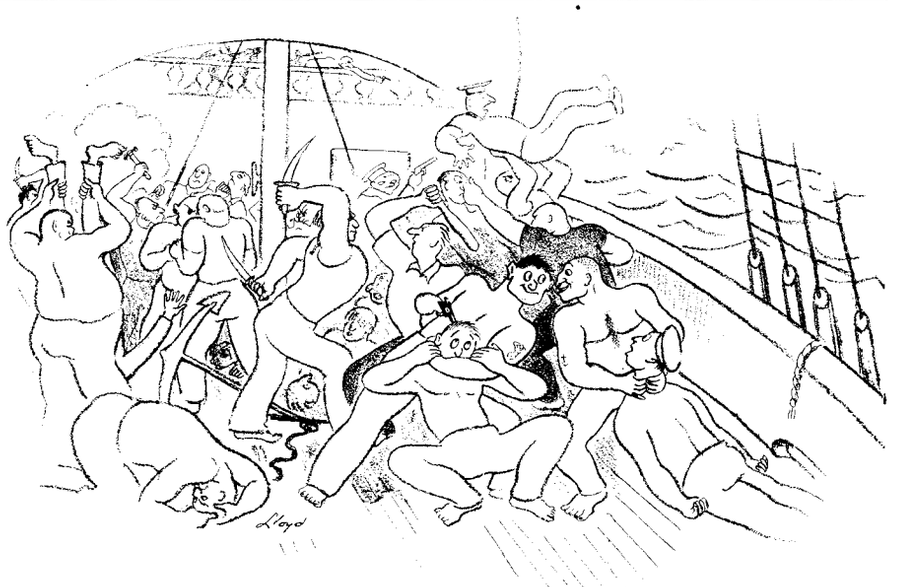
"The Golden Height"

SIR:—It is not fair! If your reviewer-who-reads-on-the-run dislikes my book, "The Golden Height," he certainly is entitled to summarize it sarcastically as "corn mush" in "Over the Counter," January 18. But it is not fair for him to misrepresent and reverse the idea of the plot. My heroine chooses a small farmer who admits he never will be rich because, among other reasons, she prefers his non-mercenary philosophy of life to that of a newspaperman frankly out for all the money he can get. Her motivation happens to be just the opposite of that which your reviewer ascribes to her, with a sneer.

Maybe I am the sort of novelist he thinks me, but, as a newspaper woman, I know when a book is reported correctly—and mine was not, by *The Saturday Review of Literature*.

MARGUERITE MOOERS MARSHALL.

New York City.



"OH, BOY! WHAT A MUTINY BOOK *THIS* WILL MAKE!"

Reply from Over the Counter

SIR:—I stick to my review. And because of its brevity I quote it:

> Social Service Iris, offspring of divorce, fears insecurity and gives up newspaperman for handsome country boy with white teeth and lots of acres.

What bothers Marguerite Mooers Marshall is the use of the word "insecurity"; hence the charge that I reversed the idea of the plot. The insecurity that heroine Iris dreaded was that of an unhappy marriage and life. To Iris money of course did not necessarily mean happiness. Her parents had money but both led unhappy, lives. Newspaperman Vance represented instability; Farmer Wheaton stability. Of course the girl loved the farmer more but it was only because he possessed those qualities that in the estimation of Iris were more genuine and sincere.

Miss Marshall's fourth sentence is practically in agreement with my review.

L. G.

Mr. Villard and the Historians

SIR:—Ancient Jahweh doubtless enjoyed his constant moral castigations of sinful Israel. Similarly, no doubt, Mr. Villard, in his review of Dubois's "Black Reconstruction" in your issue for January 18th, gets a thrill out of his condemnation of southern whites and historians, especially "J. W. Burgess and his Columbia satellites." The historian's criticism of both Jahweh and Mr. Villard is that though well-intentioned they are lacking in moral discrimination. Mr. Villard fixes his eyes upon the school program, the income taxes, and the provisions for complete equality of the races enacted by the Carpet Bag government of South Carolina and pronounces it good. The historian notes the expenditures of millions of the state's money upon costly china spittoons, mahogany tables, race horses, and bawdy houses which finally plunged the state into irretrievable bankruptcy and pronounces it bad. Mr. Villard looks at the beating and terrorising of negroes by the Ku Klux Klan and their subsequent disfranchisement and calls it bad. The historian considers the decades of hatred that preceded the war, the terrors of four years of fratricidal strife, the bitter animosities aroused by the ghastly tragedy of Reconstruction and negro rule, and the subsequent maledictions heaped upon the heads of the Southern whites by the Northern press, to which Mr. Villard's paper, *The Nation*, has contributed its share, and concludes that human nature being as it is the reactions of the Southern whites is what would be expected.

Mr. Villard, his eyes still fixed on eternal righteousness, accuses the historian of apologizing for the South. Now the historian does not deny the right of Mr. Villard to tell the South and the nation what in his judgment are its sins in the matter of the negro problem. Mr. Villard is always interesting though not always convincing. But the historian cannot for the life of him see what right Mr. Villard has to condemn his painstaking attempts to tell the truth about the matter because these do not happen to coincide with what Mr. Villard conceives ought to have been done. There is such a thing as so habituating oneself to sweeping moral condemnations of one's fellows for their sins as to lose the capacity for the moral and intellectual humility without which there cannot be the sympathetic understanding so necessary if we are to help our fellow men bear their burdens.

JOHN M. MECKLIN.

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Hanover, N. H.

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Minor Operation

"FASTER! FASTER!" By E. M. Delafield. New York: Harper & Bros. 1936. $2.50.

Reviewed by GOULD CASSAL

IF there is anything rarer than a day in June, it is a first-rate light novel. The superlative meringue appears not more than three or four times a decade. Among those in the second flight, no one provides such steady amusement as Miss Delafield, who has temporarily abandoned her best creation, the Provincial Lady, to cast an appraising look at a business woman.

"Faster! Faster!" (the title is out of "Alice in Wonderland") lacks the originality claimed by its publishers. There are no innovations in either subject or manner, but the novel is literate, a mildly amusing, rather deft sketch of a domineering female.

Miss Delafield's heroine has a certain spiritual kinship with the selfish exhibitionist of Anne Parrish's "All Kneeling." Claudia was a child with a power complex. As a professional woman she is, of course, an enormous success, granted the business man's chief crown of laurel: the hate and admiration of the office help. To her family, she is a minor Atlas supporting the world; even her jobless, discontented husband cannot wholly dislike Claudia and admits a grudging admiration for her efficiency and drive. That the drive is entirely artificial, maintained to satisfy her own idea of herself as ruler of several destinies, and that she drives herself to death because she actually likes doing it, never occurs to the adult members of the household. The husband potters about his own tasks and her mother whines. Of the children, two are caught up in the smoke screen of her personality while the third resorts to mute antagonism as an escape. Claudia's friends perceive that while she generally does the right thing, she rarely does it for the right reason, but all their pointed remarks fail to deflate the lady.

E. M. DELAFIELD

The author sometimes stacks the cards against her character, but nevertheless one feels a certain admiration for Claudia. Consistency in any form is admirable, and one almost feels sorry when she is tossed out of the novel by a luckless encounter with a tram. The same tram very nearly tosses out the story, it is so obviously a device for avoiding the issue. By that time Miss Delafield has shown that no one is capable of revising Claudia's character, so she obligingly turns the problem over to higher powers. One feels, however, that when so many individual attempts have failed, a mass showdown rather than a heavenly court-martial should be in order. The last section of the book is a quick survey of the other characters in post-mourning days. They are all a good deal happier and even Claudia's small son's juvenile melancholy is dissipated by tactful conversation and a visit to a tea shop.

In "Faster! Faster!" you will find a minor operation instead of a complete dissection: mild English irony, unexciting but pleasant enough.

A Delicate Story of Oriental Mysticism

THE MAKER OF HEAVENLY TROUSERS. By Daniele Varé. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1936. $2.

Reviewed by AMELIA LEAVITT HILL

MANY a traveller returns from the East with marvellous tales of Eastern magic—or, at least, of apparently supernatural occurrences—only to find that such tales are given more credit by other Eastern travellers than by the ordinary skeptic of the Occident. Mr. Varé has dared to introduce, with the lightest touches, this Eastern mysticism into his story, "The Maker of Heavenly Trousers." So delicately does he do it, so wisely is the climax left to the imagination of the reader, that instead of appearing only a rather unfortunate flight of imagination, as the supernatural in fiction is apt to do, he has actually added verisimilitude to the exotic setting in which he has placed his scene.

The Maker of Heavenly Trousers, who is the protagonist of the tale, owes his curious appellation to an attempted English translation of a sign which he has bought as a souvenir and which once hung over the door of a Chinese tailor. Into his household comes little Renata de' Tolomei, whose father is an engineer stationed in the interior of China, and who is known in the house as Kuniang, or "little girl." The account of the ménage,

DANIELE VARÉ

presided over by the Five Virtues (such is the family name of the five servants there employed), of the startling frankness engendered by the Chinese life in which the child is brought up, and the equally startling customs contributed by the old Russian family whose children are Kuniang's companions, makes a curious and amusing tale which throws not only Chinese and Russian customs into high relief, but, by contrast, the peculiarities of the ordinary European.

As Kuniang grows up outside influences creep into her life. Of these one of the chief is Elisalex, a Russian refugee, an intimate of Rasputin, but originally an aristocrat of the Old Régime, and a woman of outstanding charm. Mystery surrounds her, much of which is never solved. This is obviously the most artistic method of treatment, since Mr. Varé builds up so absorbing a mystery about her that any solution would of necessity smack of anti-climax. Later in the story we meet the Mongol abbot at the Lama temple in Pekin, who is possessed of hypnotic powers. Paul Dysart, the young Englishman who has fallen hopelessly in love with Kuniang, allows the abbot to put him under this spell, experimentally at first, and to let him dream of Kuniang, Peter Ibbetson-fashion. The power of the abbot and his gradually increasing influence over Paul and through him over Kuniang, his former relations with Elisalex as Prince Dorbon Oirad and the hint of some obscure connection between Elisalex and Kuniang herself, his dream of empire in some remote fastness of Asia and the gradual working out of their stories, are all too delicately indicated to be bluntly set forth here. Indeed, important parts of the tale are suggested rather than actually told, and the fact that the result is convincing and the narrative absorbing is evidence to the skill with which Mr. Varé has handled such delicate stuff.

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The Development of Opera

THE CHANGING OPERA. By Paul Bekker. Translated by Arthur Mendel. New York: W. W. Norton & Company. 1935. $3.50.

Reviewed by PAUL H. LANG

IT is doubtful whether one can find a more complex, a more arduously fought and praised genre of art than the opera. Opera does not belong to the domain of music only, its history is closely connected with the destinies of literature and other arts. Although the result of an effort to imitate Greek art, the opera is one of the most original creations of modern civilization. Historians of literature generally overlook the connections of their subject with music while musicians, in their turn, seldom venture beyond the reading of scores; as a result we have numerous books about the "stories" of opera, about singers and conductors, sometimes even about the composer of certain operas, but very little about opera itself. This is especially true in Anglo-Saxon countries where the operatic art has been an importation. Paul Bekker's latest work is a most welcome, versatile, and illuminating essay which in three hundred pages does justice to a subject completely submerged in a voluminous literature of irrelevant story-telling.

Poetry has its laws, music follows its own rules. It is evident that a literary text cannot be set to music without considering the particular problem involved in this relationship. Mr. Bekker poses and solves the problem of relationship between music and drama and shows the curious changes that affect it in various countries. It is refreshing to see the glorification of the song made the point of departure for an essay on opera. Most people recognize the fact that the song has an important part in opera but they regard it as something quite independent from the rest of the operatic fabric. The opinion was held for a long time that theatrical music was not possible unless it afforded a simple illustration to an animated drama having for its subject a sufficiently complicated plot with protagonists representing figures of historical fame. After history came the dramatized novel and the melodrama, followed by the style called *verism*. In the forced actions of the veristic drama music was reduced to the function of registering "the howls of the hangmen and the screams of the victims." This was, and still is, considered by the public as something really theatrical, and works which fell short of this essential condition were criticized as being dreadfully dull.

Romanticism and the subsequent era carried the erroneous esthetic axiom of theatrical music *ad absurdum* and set to music the whole history of the world. An examination of the libretti of Saint-Saëns and Massenet will show that every phase of history, from *Eve* and *Samson* to *Werther*, was set to music. However, if we disregard the titles and the characters of these operas, we see that this historic encyclopedia can be reduced to a single type which is a sort of amorous epic poem, following a uniformity of thought which is disquieting. Heine ridiculed this tendency admirably when he answered a musician asking for his opinion concerning a certain opera: "*Ah! Monsieur, de grâce, ne parlons pas de politique.*"

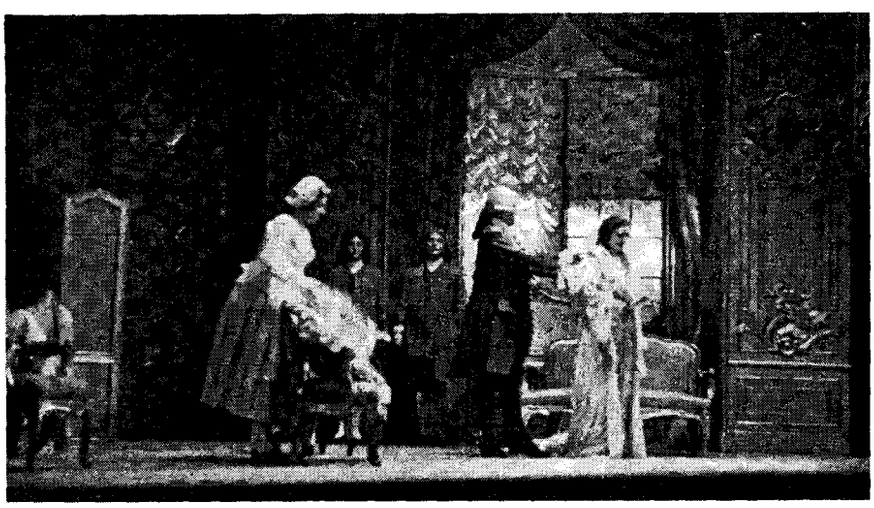
All this is perhaps taking grand opera and its offering a bit too seriously, but Mr. Bekker has more important things to say. When he undertakes to show us how a pale literary figure can be endowed with heart and soul by a great composer's music he is in his element and makes his narrative as fascinating as a novel. Yet this fluent narrative is based on solid and exhaustive knowledge of the whole field, literary and musical. The chapters in "The Changing Opera" take us through the three main territories of operatic history, Italy, Germany, and France. The author follows a clear program of investigation. He dwells on the relation of the sexes as the source of Mozart's opera structure. The whole chapter on Mozart is a model of a literary discourse on music. Mr. Bekker does justice to the pioneers of German national opera and carries the narrative up to Wagner in a convincing way.

Carlo Edwards
KIRSTEN FLAGSTAD AS ISOLDE

In the chapters on *opera buffa* and *opera comique* we find a striking analysis of the insipidity which is inherent in the *comique* as opposed to the sturdy musico-histrionic *buffa*.

> . . . the *comique* never achieved the world-significance that the *buffa* enjoyed from the moment of its birth. The *comique* was a form of practical significance, meeting practical needs, and it lacked the musical substance to become more than that.

Mr. Bekker minimizes, and justly so, Wagner's influence on Verdi in a characteristic sentence. "Wagner's influence may have helped to hasten Verdi's day of reckoning with grand opera." The author carries on his investigation with compelling logic and shows us how "in these two figures [Verdi and Wagner] German and Italian opera set up models that seemed to exhaust all conceivable possibilities of the two cultures." The subsequent chapters deal with the ultimate contribution of French opera to the creation of the lyric opera type and there is a concise chapter on contemporary opera. Perhaps some reader would like to see a little more about Lully, Rameau, and a few other composers, but the author's aim was to follow and analyze the *curriculum vitæ* of a living operatic repertoire, and in this he succeeded in a remarkable way. The translation is good and fluent.



LOTTE LEHMANN IN "ROSENKAVALIER"

Paul H. Lang is associate professor of music in Columbia University.

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Economics of Dictatorship

FASCISM AND NATIONAL SOCIALISM: A Study of the Economic and Social Policies of the Totalitarian State. By Michael T. Florinsky. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1936. $2.50.

Reviewed by ROBERT C. BROOKS

TOTALITARIAN states, *alias* dictatorships, have been dealt with at length by political scientists; also to a somewhat less extent by historians. And of course international journalists have been busy in this field from the drop of the hat. Recently even novelists have begun to cultivate it. On the other hand economists have held aloof, although the importance of their possible contribution is beyond question. With the exception of the works, now somewhat out of date, of Calvin B. Hoover and Carmen Haider on Russia, Germany, and Italy, few competent studies of this aspect of dictatorships have been produced.

Considering the relative neglect to date of the bread-and-butter side of totalitarianism, Professor Florinsky's "Fascism and National Socialism" deserves an especially warm welcome. It is based upon a thorough reading of available literature, public and private, and upon frequent visits to Germany and Italy, the most recent as late as 1934 and 1935. The author's point of view is objective but he has not refrained from criticism, some of it trenchant enough, nor from the expression of his own views. That the latter incline toward democracy is apparent.

Professor Florinsky's earlier chapters on the eclipse of democracy in Italy and Germany and on the articles of faith making up the new political creeds of these two countries, present little that is new; nevertheless they do serve admirably as an introduction to his later and more specific contribution. His discussion of the condition of workers and farmers under totalitarianism contains much material of great value; moreover it is presented in simple, non-technical language which can be grasped by ordinary readers as well as by economists. Statistics are used sparingly, rather too sparingly as a matter of fact. In the chapters on workers and farmers Professor Florinsky makes a number of concessions to the claims of Fascist and Nazi apologists, claims which, by the way, are usually rejected rather scornfully by communist and even by orthodox economists. A chapter entitled "The Nemesis: Public Finance and Foreign Trade" describes present day Italian and German conditions in these important aspects as *kolossal schlimm* (perfectly awful)—to quote an informant who nevertheless was an exuberant Nazi. Candor compels the author to admit, however, that various democratic countries have made similar mistakes. Professor Florinsky's discussion of "War and Peace" also condemns sharply the militarist proclivities of totalitarians, particularly those of Benito Africanus. On the other hand, he criticizes effectively the sanctionist policies of the League of Nations.

A tremendous amount of detailed work needs to be done before the economic policies of dictatorship can be understood and appraised thoroughly. Professor Florinsky has supplied an excellent brief introduction to this important field.

Robert C. Brooks, a member of the staff of Swarthmore College, is the author of "Deliver Us from Dictators!"

Robert Herrick

(*Continued from page* 4)

Wo'd ye oyle of Blossomes get
Take it from my *Julia's* sweat:
Oyl of Lillies, and of Spike,
From her moysture take the like.

Not one of Herrick's five senses but is used to deepen the emotions he experiences as he penetrates further and further along the rain-soft mossy paths, smelling of the sappy juice of blue bells and "tinseled with twilight," of his secret garden.

Shew me thy feet; shew me thy legs, thy thighes;
Shew me those *Fleshie Principalities;*
Shew me the Hill (where smiling Love doth sit).

To a discerning reader the beautiful but studied verses in Noble Numbers form no serious stumbling block to the belief that Herrick alone of all the English poets is a true amoral hedonist after the ancient classical manner. He does not hesitate to give Christianity itself a pagan turn, and when he writes of the Nativity it is as though he regretted that Jesus had not been a favored sylvan brat suckled gipsy fashion under a dog-rose Devonshire hedge.

Instead of neat Inclosures
Of inter-woven Osiers;
Instead of fragrant Posies
Of Daffadills, and Roses;
Thy cradle, Kingly Stranger,
As Gospell tells,
Was nothing els,
But, here, a homely manger.

Sir Edmund Gosse believed that in the days of his early manhood Herrick had a bastard child by Julia. To Mistress Thomasin Parsons, the pretty daughter of Mr. John Parsons, organist and master of the choristers at Westminster Abbey, we know he wrote these lines:

If thou ask me, dear, Wherefore
I do write of thee no more,
I must answer, sweet, thy part
Less is here than in my heart.

It is likely enough that the musician's two daughters were amongst the fair visitors who used to come to the West Country in the summer months, and it may well have been in a cowslip field that these lovely lines to Thomasin were written:

Grow up in beauty, as thou dost begin,
And be of all admired, Thomasin.

Archbishop Laud in his attempt to bring the clergy under a stricter discipline inaugurated a system of espionage. There is extant a state paper belonging to the year 1640 in which these significant words are to be read:

Thomsen Parsons hath had a Bastard lately; shee was brought to bed at Greenwch, Mr. Herrisque a minister possest of a very good Living in Devonshire hath not resided there haveing noe lycence for his non residence and not being Chapline to any Noble man or man qualified by law as I heare, his lodging is at Westminster, in the little Amrie at Nikolas Wilkes his house where the said Thomsen Parsons lives.

As those whose religion it is to worship life are apt to do, Robert Herrick lived to a great age. The last written record of him is to be found in the parish register of Dean Prior. Here are the rueful words:

ROBERT HERRICK, VICKER, WAS BURIED YE 15TH DAY OF OCTOBER, 1674.

There his bones lie in that old Devonshire Churchyard wrapped fast in their shroud, the bones of a Clerk in Holy Orders who could have better led a Bacchanalian rout than serve at a Christian altar.

The Body is the soules poore house, or home,
Whose Ribs the laths are, and whose Flesh the loame.

Thus they have lain under the shadow of that fine embattlemented tower while the petals of two-hundred-and-sixty-one generations of celandines have turned from gold to silver in the ditches, and as many generations of winter field rats have sought the shelter of barley mows. His sermons are forgot, no text of them remains, and yet like hints out of a far past punctiliously preserved in the matrices of agates his wisdom has come down to us. This paper shall end with scraps of his philosophy selected at random, as one might select fortune-telling slips from a Canary woman at Widdicombe Fair:

Let me not live, if I not love,
Since I as yet did never prove,
Where Pleasures met: at last, doe find,
All Pleasures meet in Woman-kind.

While the milder Fates consent,
Let's enjoy our merriment:
Drink, and dance, and pipe, and play:
Kiss our *Dollies* night and day:

By Time, and Counsell, doe the best we can,
Th' event is never in the power of man.

No man comes late unto that place from whence
Never man yet had a regredience.

Llewelyn Powys, brother of John Cowper Powys and T. F. Powys, has written several novels and books of essays.

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The BOWLING GREEN by Christopher Morley

Streamlines

[*Editor's Note: Several subscribers have asked the Green to print here a talk that was broadcast by radio, December 26 ultimo, on the program "America's Town Meeting of the Air." The soliloquy printed here was part of an informal discussion carried further by Miss Fannie Hurst, Mr. T. S. Stribling, Miss Audrey Wurdemann and Father Francis Talbot, S.J. I print this with acknowledgment to the League for Political Education which copyrighted the program and to the American Book Company, 88 Lexington Ave., N. Y. City, which issued the whole discussion in a pamphlet—sold by them for 10 cents.*]

IT'S very valuable, in the life of the mind, when we realize that we rarely know what we are really thinking about; under the casual exterior preoccupations of the day the deep current of our imaginative life moves subtle and often unsuspected. The conscious intelligence, which is the least important part of any artist, is often helpless and bewildered in its attempt to understand or utilize that interior flux of dream, intuition, fantasy—call it what you wish—which is the marrow of any distinguished creative excellence. I am tempted to call your attention to a series of three articles by Thomas Wolfe, called "The Story of a Novel," in the *Saturday Review of Literature*. There with the engaging naiveté which is one of Mr. Wolfe's highest qualities, and with a sense of tormented indignation and astonishment, he reveals something of the struggle of a young writer to put the whole feeling of life into literature, to break through to the inside of his mind. He is writing, of course, about his book *Of Time and the River*, and he describes how after several years' work and more than a million words written, he felt he was just getting started; when, to his chagrin, his editor told him that from the point of view of the publisher the book was finished. Perhaps Satan himself said that to the Creator on the evening of the Sixth Day. At any rate those articles by Mr. Wolfe are not only of a quite touching frankness but also perhaps dangerous reading for young writers. I fear lest some may draw from them the quite unwarranted conclusion that if you write a million words you can fatigue a publisher into accepting them.

Mr. Wolfe's struggles in attempting to reduce his manuscript to tolerable proportion remind me of something that happened the other day to a scientific friend of mine. A distinguished artist in Mexico City was lately commissioned to do a symbolic mural for a government building. The Mexican ministry of art desired the painting to be modernist in style, and the artist decided to attempt in the central panel some graphic suggestion or representation of the Theory of Relativity. My mathematical friend received from the artist the following telegram: "Send by return wire intelligible statement of Einstein Formula." My friend with heroic patience condensed the necessary equations and assumptions into a Western Union Day Letter. Even under the most savage compression it cost him over $10. I rather suspect that the receiving office in Mexico City may have imagined it to be some sinister diplomatic or capitalistic code. I have a copy of that telegram in my pocket and cherish it as a historic document.

I have lingered for a moment on Mr. Wolfe because his confessions show—in an extreme, almost a morbid form—the struggle that confronts every artist in his task of catalyzing the emotional and sensory material of life into the soluble stuff of literature. These anxieties and horrors that he describes are not unique to himself, not even unique to the art of writing; they are a part of every imaginative frenzy from mathematics to manslaughter. In the case of Mr. Wolfe they are especially severe, I gather, because he prefers to do his thinking on paper; apparently he does not edit in his mind before actually dipping the pen. Some others go through their struggle in the lonely cavern of thought, and the result does not come to ink until it has taken form and profile beforehand. The finest statement of this latter method was made by Mr. Goudy, the great typographer, when he was asked how he designed a new font of type. He brooded a while and then said, "Why, you think of a letter and draw around it." But whatever method the writer adopts, or finds forced upon him, his first problem is to teach himself to think; and to find an audience which is hospitable to thought.

Now the concern that occupies my own mind is that probably never anywhere, at any time, was secluded or creative thinking so difficult to achieve as in America today. Every human being is endowed with a limited and infinitely precious stock of attention-power; and life today is such that—unless the individual is singularly obstinate and cunning—the native and tender innocence of the mind, the artist's birthright, is dissipated or conventionalized by endless, incessant, competitive demands. By newspapers, by electric lights, by telephone, by radio, by moving pictures, by airplane and motor car and church and school and State, by a thousand appeals, admonitions, and interruptions, the mind is assailed and distracted. When the time comes to throw the whole power of one's will into some superb task, too often we find our faculties grown brittle or callous by repeated overstimulus. We hear a good deal about the agricultural problem of soil erosion; hillsides denuded of fertile topsoil by the action of streams, or great regions of Mid-

STREAMLINE ELECTRIC LOCOMOTIVE, P. R. R.

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dle Western richness scoured off by dust storms. Surely not less serious is the matter of mind erosion: the dust storms of daily excitement and of continual triviality can easily blow away the sensitive topsoil of the spirit. The result is a general barren and shallow nervous credulity. Think how many works of genius have been hysterically acclaimed in the past fifteen years and almost as quickly forgotten. As a practising critic I can include myself in the indictment.

Sometimes I read in the financial pages about what is called "Nuisance Money." Capital is notoriously timid, and when there are rumors of international trouble apparently a lot of money skips to and fro (by cable, I suppose) looking for a good, safe breeding place. I am no economist, but I always visualize capital as being not unlike a setting hen; she makes a great fuss when anyone gets near her nest.

In the same way there's an extraordinary lot of Nuisance Thinking evident nowadays: shoals or flocks of fashionable or momentary notions (economic or aesthetic) that rush to and fro; they hive suddenly in some magazine or clique; then as suddenly buzz away. I often think of the old fellow described by Hazlitt as having been "frightened to death by a ventriloquist." Whole slabs and sections of the American public are in constant danger, it sometimes seems, of that same fate. We have many ventriloquists in our public life: in literature, in religion, in politics. By ventriloquists, I mean people who talk in a deep menacing tone from the emotional entrails rather than from the rational skull. One great ventriloquist was tragically removed by assassination some months ago; but there will always be plenty more. Particularly in the months to come, with political issues paramount, we may expect to hear the deep stomach tones of the professional terrorizer.

All this is a part of life and has its influence on literature. The books of our time have born the birthmarks of our own era; it is not to be blamed upon the Muse if in an age of hysteria, cynicism, and fright some of her offerings show the stigmata of the general alarm. The magnificent achievements of science have also raised up devils to plague us, principalities and powers we have not learned how to control. I mention only one, of such terrific scope that it reaches from zenith to pit and is efficient in both regions: the great life-giving and destroying angel, Publicity. We have seen only a few days ago, in a crowning humiliation, an example of its cruel power. People can be killed with photographs as surely as with guns.

The arts are encouraged by reasonable publicity but they need privacy too. Sudden convulsions of excitement, waves of fashionable acclaim, are not always salutary. May I recall the humorous interlude of Gertrude Stein? The Muse herself is wary of little groups, intellectual totems and fetiches, fashionable sensationalisms. The dreams, powers, tendencies which forward great creation move silently and very far underneath the surface. I remember a scientific report I read in the newspaper some time ago, about a rancher in the State of Washington. By some oddity of his molecular constitution he was painfully sensitive to the radio waves which pass through most of us unnoticed. His body acted as a kind of storage battery, and whenever anyone in the neighborhood turned on the radio he suffered severely. If it was only a local station the effect was not much worse than neuralgia, but when a really powerful national hookup was coming through, his condition was deplorable. When the White House was on the air he turned pale, his eyes bulged, the veins of his neck stood out like cords, and he usually fell down in convulsions. He experimented with a homemade remedy, which was to carry a cane wound with copper wire to act as a lightning conductor. Finally an engineer in Tacoma was able to help him—he invented a kind of condenser which goes up the victim's sleeves and down his trouser legs and discharges the coagulated electricity through his boots.

That homely illustration has its application to the arts. Not by sudden spasms of bandar-log excitement or novelty does literature win new ground; but by subtle continuous sensibility, by patient and laborious choices, by the onward flow and increase of a nation's awareness. The creative sympathies that will help to beget the next great novel are now moving unguessed and unperceived in thousands of us who will be its readers. Perhaps one sound advice for a writer is a line I found in the instruction booklet for the Ford car. It says—"Don't ride the clutch." In other words, keep the narrative moving steadily and without sudden shifts of tempo. It must have continuity—the mind of the reader must be able to flow concurrently, and without apprehensions of abrupt change of technique. It's a good motto for governments too. How many business men have been worried because they could feel the heavy federal foot hovering on the pedal?

As a final provocative for argument or personal testimony, I suggest one more thought. Literature is not separate from life but is one of many evidences of living. We can think of it as a form of companionship, or of communication; or as an attempt, heroic and impossible, to make life stand still long enough to be looked at. But however you describe it, it is subject to the general conditions and humors of the life around it. And when you see a phenomenon which is very evident in one department of living you are likely to find its analogues elsewhere. The outstanding physical phenomenon of our time is an actual change of shape in the mechanics of civilization. The so-called streamline principle, already familiar in all forms of transport, is evident in intellectual activity also. As well as houses and clothes and furnitures, so have the arts and even perhaps the religions shown some tendency to simplify, to reduce unnecessary friction, to adopt an outline that will pass with diminished resistance through the opposing medium (whatever that may be). Now the opposing medium, in the case of a writer, is the mind of the reader. If he can so shape and mold his story that the reader, instead of resisting, collaborates with him, actually does part of the work (even unconsciously) the writer has achieved a high artistic triumph. And I seem sometimes to discern, in the work of some writers who are intuitively ahead of their generation, what I like to think of as a kind of streamline dynamics. Virginia Woolf once said that "The novelist of the future will take reality for granted." By that I suppose she meant he won't waste time and energy on describing details of furniture or scenery that the reader can well supply—would even prefer to supply—from his own mind. Willa Cather said the same thing in a brilliant essay years ago, *The Novel Démeublé*—that is, unfurnished. This introduces a topic too large, and perhaps too professional, to enter into now in detail. I am suggesting merely that one neglected consideration in the art of writing is this: not how much can you do *for* the reader, but how much can you cajole him into doing for you. How much of your book can the reader write for you, in his own mind? I coined an aphorism once—coined is too precise a word; I mean I laboriously chopped it out—that one test of any form of expression is the area of silence it covers. I don't believe I can exactly restate what I meant by that, but I *feel* its meaning. There can never be any precise testing-blocks or efficiency tables for the success of a work of literature, because it is published new and different in the mind of every reader, but I can't help thinking that when it attempts to say or show everything, an art is on the wrong track.

Finally let me say that two lines of a poem by the late Sir William Watson are good medicine to remember—

"Momentous to himself as I to me
Hath each man been that woman ever bore."

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 97)

BURTON: "ANATOMY OF MELANCHOLY."

Friends and companions get you gone;
'Tis my desire to be alone;
Ne'er well but when my thoughts and I
Do domineer in privacy.
No gem, no treasure like to this. . . .
All my joys to this are folly,
Naught so sweet as melancholy.

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John C. H. Wu in **T'ien Hsia Monthly** says:
"Lo! a wise man is talking! . . . Dr. Lin is past forty, and I am glad to be able to say that he is neither a crook nor feeble-minded. He is one of those interesting 'big children,' like Tolstoy, Robert Louis Stevenson and Sir James Barrie.

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"A complete survey of Chinese life in a positively brilliant and extremely lucid style which makes reading a real pleasure. There are very few English writers today who can write English of such delicate beauty."

Peking and Tientsin Times:
"The most human, articulate, honest, entertaining and perhaps courageous English book yet written about China."

Yao Hsin-nung in **The China Critic** says in an open letter to Lin Yutang:
"I think your book is one of the few best books yet written about China, and I wish to recommend it with all my heart to the general reading public including those who read for pleasure and not merely for knowledge."

Mr. Yao however makes the criticism that Dr. Lin has: ". . . made the Chinese intellectuals the basis of your discussions and neglected to bring the common people on as frequently as they deserve." To this Dr. Lin replies vigorously:

"I wish only to state here that I am a peasant boy of Fukien, and proud of it, for I have a seal with the four characters 'Peasant Boy of Lungch'i.' I have assisted at harvest and caught fish and shrimps in mountain streams and gathered fuel on the mountains. No one can accuse me of not knowing the farmers of China, for they are my people and not the long-gowned gentry, nor the English-speaking Chinese in foreign dress. My grandmother was a peasant woman of extraordinary muscular prowess and could drive men out of our village at the point of a carrying pole. My father was a pedlar of sweets and rice and occasionally an amateur dealer in bamboo shoots in his boyhood. He knew what it meant to carry a heavy burden and some of his hard experiences were recounted by him to us children over and over again as a lesson for charity to common labourers. As an old Christian pastor, he once fought a tax collector for taxing one hundred and twenty cash out of a bundle of two hundred cash of fuel gathered on the mountains by an old man and carried thirty *li* to a village fair. So I may be justified when I say that I know the joys as well as the sorrows of Chinese farmers . . . the great bulk of Chinese farmers *who are my people.*"

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History and Propaganda

EUROPEAN CIVILIZATION: ITS ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT. By Various Contributors, under the direction of Edward Eyre. Vol. I. Prehistoric Man and Earliest Known Societies. $8.75; Vol. II. Rome and Christendom. $5.25; Vol. III. The Middle Ages. $6.25. New York: Oxford University Press. 1935.

Reviewed by ERWIN R. GOODENOUGH

CAN history be written? Logicians insist that history without prejudice is no more than a chronicle, since any selection of evidence is made, inevitably, on the basis of preconceptions. There is no resisting this argument in theory, yet the historian knows very well the difference between a work which has honestly grown out of the sources and one which has not; between a mind quite willing to alter preconceptions as the evidence once collected seems to require, and a mind in which an *idée fixe* actually rules, prompts the deliberate suppression of large blocks of material, and ends in special pleading rather than what seems to be history at all. The distinction between honest history and propaganda is a real one, logic or no logic. The historian writes what he has found as a result of an honest search in which he has been trying to understand how conditions at a given time grew out of what went before. The propagandist, believing in the value of some program or institution for society, writes to make that program or institution important or attractive. The distinction is one that is felt rather than reasoned. It is true that we can never be free from preconceptions, and so honest history must always be an ideal rather than a realization, just as is honest physical science, but historical writing is of value in direct proportion to its approach to the ideal.

On the basis of this distinction there can be no question on which side these three imposing volumes fall. In spite of a great deal of history in some of the contributions, as a whole the series is designed to be a piece of propaganda rather than a history, propaganda for the Roman Catholic Church. Sincere convictions on any point are in themselves too rare and lovely to be treated with anything but respect. But when a book is put out by a press whose imprint has for so long meant the best in scientific publication, and is put out in a form which will lead the buyer to suppose he is getting a work of unbiased history; when such a work proves to be a plea for Catholicism, then we have not even honest propaganda.

The first volume opens with a treatment of the problem of human beginnings from the anthropological point of view, setting forth a theory accepted only by Catholics and conservative Protestant churchmen, that man began with a primitive monotheism and monogamy, from which, it is implied, he has somehow fallen. The evidence adduced is that of contemporary savages who are treated as synonymous with "primitive man," although such a use of evidence is one of the first fallacies against which a beginner in anthropology is warned.

With man thus started upon his journey, the serious work of telling his story can begin. J. L. Myres gives two very competent and interesting sections on the ethnology of the Mediterranean peoples and of the Indo-Europeans. C. F. Jean then gives an admirable account of the civilizations of the Ancient East, including Egypt, in which the very latest discoveries are used, even the extraordinary recent finds in Ras-Shamra and Minet-El-Beida treated in an appendix. When the ancient Hebrews are discussed the special interest of the series seems to appear, for the author's attitude changes intangibly but noticeably; yet the section as a whole is very well done. It is hard to see what is gained in T. E. Peet's chronicle of Egyptian history, which goes over ground already covered by Jean and is much less interesting.

In the section on Greek history A. W. Gomme ably presents the creative genius of the Greeks and their achievements. He has no sympathy with Greek religion, calls it "at best superficial," and has so little appreciation of the varieties of Greek religion that he represents Plato as moving within the framework of the conventional religion of the state. The earlier mystery religions are depreciated, and the later ones not mentioned at all, though many people are coming to regard them as one of the major contributions of the Greeks to civilization. The treatment of Greek religion fits this section into the plan of the whole work.

A. W. Gomme and S. N. Miller together cover Roman history and fill the bulk of the second volume. Both men write clearly and forcibly, and present an interesting account. Their concern is chiefly with institutional and economic matters, and from this point of view it would be hard to imagine a better review of Roman times. But a history of Roman civilization is not offered. Of nearly five hundred pages, only about two deal with Roman literature, and there is nothing appreciable on art or philosophy (though philosophy may have been purposely passed over because of Taylor's later section). What is most surprising in itself, but again a definite part of the purpose of the series as a whole, is an absence of sympathy with any aspect of Roman life except the institutional. The Empire failed at the end, we are told, because of "the exhaustion of the philosophy of life by which men had lived." Once patriotism began to fail there was nothing to live on, for "Greece had exhausted the resources of the natural reason, and the Empire fell heir to the inevitable disillusionment." Stoicism "was a synthesis . . . of recurrent moods of rationalist pride and pessimism." It was Neo-Platonism which really led the way out from the abyss of Stoicism, because it taught men to live on what was for the Romans a new principle, the principle of supernatural authority. This the Romans of the age were learning to do much better by "giving their intellectual assent to the Christian revelation."

That is, while (or, as many of the contributors would put it, "whilst") the sections on Rome give an excellent institutional account, they leave the reader with the inference that except for the institutional developments the sooner men forgot Roman civilization the better.

The volume closes with two articles on Christianity, one by the Reverend W. E. Brown, and one by S. N. Miller. Father Brown writes under the heading "Christianity to the Edict of Milan," but instead of giving an account of the development of Christianity during the first three centuries he presents a clever (and extremely able) apologetic argument for the traditional claim of Rome that the Church was divinely founded by Christ through Peter and the Apostles. The purpose of the series, already strongly hinted, now is plainly revealed. When Miller, the Roman historian, resumes the story to tell

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of "The Church, the Later Empire, and Barbarians," his account is an argument to prove that the Roman Pontiff was always the center of Christianity, and hence that the Papal claims to be the true successors of Peter with "Petrine authority" are valid. Other aspects of the period are treated, but never so that the Pope as Pope is lost sight of. The section ends with the peculiar key sentence for the next volume on the Middle Ages: "As Christendom, antiquity was not only fulfilled but renewed."

The third volume continues the argument. D. C. Douglas writes to show that medieval civilization, in all its good features, was the product of the Church. First the Church was the only connecting link with classical, that is with any, civilization. Second, as a result, the Catholic dream was the essential core of medieval civilization, and only by the dominance of the Pope over every aspect of life could civilization be achieved at all. Some of the chapters are very well done, notably those on medieval institutions and culture. But the section as a whole is an argument rather than a history. Details, or great blocks of material, are entirely omitted, such as the non-ecclesiastical forces working for order, or the way in which Papal ambitions for power frequently threw Italy and Germany into chaos. The development of the towns and commerce is not mentioned, nor the Papal greed for estates. Thus is simplified the problem of representing the Popes as the great and proper leaders of civilization.

The work of Douglas is, however, more nearly history than that of J. Guiraud who carries the narrative through the religious controversies of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and treats the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in general. The heresies were of course "evil" and "mischief," and, granted all the cruelties of the Inquisition (which he elaborately discounts), it was much better that the heresies be suppressed than become the origin of such disasters as the religious wars with Protestantism, or as the horrors of heresy rampant in the late Russian revolution! The later Middle Ages are inevitably treated as a period of decline. The rise of lawyers, the challenge which French King and German Emperor in turn made to the Papacy, the conciliar movement, all these were steady degeneration. In contrast the Popes in this period were like Gregory X in his struggle for Italian control against Charles of Anjou, a struggle in which Gregory "was animated by a supernatural spirit and subordinated his whole policy to one single end, the advancement of the kingdom of God." The development of political theory after Dante through Marsiglio and Occam is shocking heresy. Wycliffe is of course caricatured. Of Humanism the author states: "So long as it accommodated itself to the Christian tradition, it formed a civilization whose grandeur rivalled its beauty, but which, becoming more and more perverted into a revived paganism, drove the minds and morals of men to the worst excess." This sentence is really the theme of the extended treatment of all aspects of the Renaissance. The fact that the Papacy was at times touched by the spirit of the age is admitted, though there was no occasion to mention such things as the political greed of the Borgias. Indeed it was this deplorable lapse which later became the "pretext" for reform on which "Luther and the Reformation precipitated the German world into a welter of anarchy."

Fortunately the volume closes with a little more than a hundred pages by A. E. Taylor on "Ancient and Medieval Philosophy." In the chapter on Medieval Philosophy Professor Taylor presents a beautifully articulated statement, but it is in the chapter on Greek Philosophy that a master's hand is most apparent. I do not recall ever reading an epitome of a great life work put into fifty pages of such clarity and depth.

It is interesting, after going through these volumes, to turn back to the Preface: "There has been no attempt to impose on the work any unity of outlook beyond that common to all scholars." One begins to wonder about a number of things, but chiefly about the Oxford University Press.

Erwin R. Goodenough is professor of the history of religion in Yale University.

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February Choice of

The Book-of-the-Month Club

$2.75

The Hoover Administration

A Documented Narrative

by W. S. Myers and W. H. Newton

"A book of immense importance not merely in the present, but as a storehouse for all future historians. . . It is written with the utmost frankness; it contains facts which have never been in print before; and it is a history and not a defense." *Charles Willis Thompson in The New York Sun.* $3.50

Fifth Big Printing

We Who Are About to Die

by David Lamson

"Fascinating in itself and to my notion profoundly important. . . . Eventually you will get it and be glad, I think, that I told you to." *Alexander Woollcott.* $2.50

at all bookstores

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS, NEW YORK

Eleventh Big Printing

EUROPA

by **Robert Briffault**

$2.75 Scribners

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The New Books

Art

ART IN THE WESTERN WORLD. By David M. Robb and J. J. Garrison. Harpers. 1935. $4.

In this clearly written book, with 370 well-chosen illustrations, architecture, painting, and sculpture are treated separately, painting, except for the period before 1300, being covered by Professor Garrison. In general the intention is to trace the development of styles, illustrating each by a monument or two, and as far as possible suggesting the historical and spiritual background. To do this in less than 700 pages involves a somewhat cruel syncopation. It would be possible for the young student reading this book to feel that the work of art, like a widely advertised bread, had never been touched with human hands. Something of skilful individual appreciation emerges in the part devoted to modern art, but even here there are gaps that it would be hard for the neophyte to fill. For example, without at least a mention of a previous century of Italianism in Flanders, the development of Rubens remains unexplained. Similarly the very brief treatment of the Post-impressionists leaves their doctrinal basis quite in the air.

These may seem necessary sacrifices, and no one who has had experience in this sort of writing will criticize them severely. Yet it remains an open question whether in advance of considerable concrete experience these broad generalizations can mean much to a student. However, accepting the plan of the book, it is executed in a workmanlike manner. On the development of late classical, medieval, and baroque style it is wholly up to date, and this cannot be said of the many similar one-volume histories. Entirely exemplary is the apparatus, in chronological tables, bibliography, and index. The numerous halftone cuts are uncommonly sharp and selected with discretion.

F. J. M.

Fiction

DARBY AND JOAN. By Maurice Baring. Knopf. 1936. $2.

These Victorian social notes are blandly and urbanely reported by a connoisseur of British diplomatic circles. Actually, according to the author, the story of his "Darby and Joan" is a true one belonging to the reign of the Tudors, and he has merely transferred it into a nineteenth century setting. But no book could savor less of Elizabethan exuberance and more of the polite, corseted complacence of an era which Mr. Baring, himself, barely escaped. The calamity of Joan Bredon's unhappy love affair and two loveless marriages is discreetly masked behind the patter of the Countess San Felice's luncheon in Florence, Mrs. Carleton's dinner party in London, the Governor's dinner party in Malta, etc., etc.

It is the world of the *mariage de convenance*, of the *cavaliere servente*, of distinguished ambassadors and M. P.'s, who translate the classics in their leisure. Mr. Baring marks it all with a laconic tongue and a glint in his eye. For his heroine he reserves a special sympathy. Her scrupulous reluctance to gamble with love, Catholicism, or even social prestige he exalts into a gentle and appealing skepticism. But to this reader Joan and the book devoted to her are, like Tennyson's Maud, altogether too "icily regular, splendidly null."

D. K.

ACTOR'S BLOOD. By Ben Hecht. Covici-Friede. 1936. $2.

There is something old-fashioned about Ben Hecht. As we read the best of these stories we kept thinking of Ambrose Bierce, and yet they didn't have the lightning deftness of the best of Bierce. Just as when we watched the talking-pictures concocted by Messrs. Hecht & MacArthur, and with which they had so much fun, we felt the conceptions were way out of date, in the never-never land of auctorial imagination. As a matter of fact the story is here in this book out of which came one of those pictures, "Crime Without Passion," in which Claude Rains was so effective. Maybe it and the title-story, "Actor's Blood," are the best of the lot. "In the Midst of Death" is a twisting-around of a Bierce title, "In the Midst of Life," but the story doesn't come within parasangs of what Bierce could do with such material. The other stories are care-

(*Continued on page* 22)

Announcing the first book publication of

TWENTY-TWO UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING AND ROBERT BROWNING

¶ It is these letters which created a world-wide sensation when sold at public auction in New York, April, 1935, for $40,000 to the United Feature Syndicate, the present owner of the originals.

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The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

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THE MOTIVES OF NICHOLAS HOLTZ *A. Laing and T. Painter* (Farrar & Rinehart: $2.)	Frightful virus discovered by young chemist and manipulated by wicked capitalist threatens to erase population but is stopped.	Your judge shuddered steadily—and when someone grabbed a carrion-carrying kitten and it popped its skin—he passed out.	Super-Horrifier
JUDGE ROBINSON MURDERED! *R. L. Goldman* (Coward-McCann: $2.)	Crusading young newspaper owner goes through hell and high water to lick political boss and solve solon's killing.	Shrewd mixture of amateur criminology and underworld stuff—with a windup that's a knockout!	Excellent
MURDER FOR WHAT? *Kurt Steel* (Bobbs-Merrill: $2.)	Upstate murder leads to killing of suspected playboy-novelist in private op's N. Y. apt., before Henry Hyer nails head of gang.	Gangsters, gamblers, counterfeiters contribute fast action to a tough but literate thriller. Mystery is easy to guess.	Good of its kind
DEATH OF AN ELOQUENT MAN *Charlotte Murray Russell* (Crime Club: $2.)	Machine politician killed on eve of election. Jane Edwards brazenly snoops her way to surprise solution.	Although one often wants to sock the lady who helps the dumb cops it's otherwise a grand yarn.	Good

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The Clearing House

CONDUCTED BY AMY LOVEMAN

Inquiries, accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope, should be directed to Miss Loveman, in care of The Saturday Review.

A BALANCED RATION FOR A WEEK'S READING

YEARS ARE SO LONG. By Josephine Lawrence. *Stokes.*

BRAZILIAN ADVENTURE. By Peter Fleming. *Scribners.*

A COMMON FAITH. By John Dewey. *Yale University Press.*

I BROKE off last time in the middle of a list of books for a famous New York parish house which wishes to establish a reference library in its Rest and Reading Room, with a promise to continue it in this issue. So, true to my word, I resume, and begin with some of the volumes which should be useful to the business man or woman who may wish to check up on a historical fact. There are certain series of books, of course, which do honor to any library and if space and means permit it would be well to provide. Such are Rhodes's HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES (Macmillan), Oberholtzer's HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES SINCE THE CIVIL WAR (Macmillan), and Green's HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH PEOPLE (Macmillan). There's good reading in these works for anyone who wants to spend the noon hour living in the past and deriving example for the present. However, such comprehensive historical studies as the foregoing may be beyond the means of the Reading Room. If so (or at any rate, since regardless of what else is placed on the shelf concise histories should be there) Beard's RISE OF AMERICAN CIVILIZATION (Macmillan), Adams's THE EPIC OF AMERICA (Little, Brown), Mark Sullivan's OUR TIMES (Scribners), Hazen's EUROPE SINCE 1815 (Holt), Duruy's GENERAL HISTORY OF THE WORLD (Crowell), and Rostovtsev's HISTORY OF THE ANCIENT WORLD (Oxford University Press) would make a good nucleus of informative books for the general reader. Bryce's AMERICAN COMMONWEALTH (Macmillan) ought to have its place on the shelf, and Wells's OUTLINE OF HISTORY (Macmillan) should be there. On it, too, could go Ploetz's MANUAL OF UNIVERSAL HISTORY (Houghton Mifflin).

The Reading Room, its custodian says, wishes some general works on grammar and English usage. Fowler's MODERN ENGLISH USAGE (Oxford University Press) is, of course, indispensable for the last, and beside it should stand, if an advanced work is desired, either Jespersen's PHILOSOPHY OF GRAMMAR (Holt) or George Philip Krapp's ELEMENTS OF ENGLISH GRAMMAR (Scribners). GOOD ENGLISH (Macmillan), by Henry S. Canby and J. B. Opdyke, is a good volume to keep handy for anyone who wishes to refer to a simple presentation of elementary facts of grammar and rhetoric. Probably there will be those among the Reading Room patrons who will have occasion to look up verse, not only quotations but also complete poems. For them should be provided that standard volume, now in process of revision but even in its present form indispensable, Bartlett's FAMILIAR QUOTATIONS (Little, Brown) and Burton Stevenson's recent and exhaustive THE HOME BOOK OF QUOTATIONS (Dodd, Mead); Stevenson's HOME BOOK OF VERSE (Holt), an admirable anthology, but one which could be well supplemented by the OXFORD BOOK OF ENGLISH VERSE (Oxford University Press) and Palgrave's GOLDEN TREASURY (Everyman's Library, Dutton). Of course if the parish wants to go farther in the poetry line it could supply copies of the works of the standard poets,—Byron, Shelley, Keats, Browning, etc. Then, I suppose, there must be some material on science, though the field is so vast that it is difficult to select anything specific where there is so much to be considered. Perhaps general surveys like Robert J. Harvey-Gibson's TEN THOUSAND YEARS OF SCIENCE (Macmillan) or Sir J. Arthur Thomson's OUTLINE OF SCIENCE (Putnam), might prove satisfactory. C. C. Furnas's recently issued THE UNFINISHED BUSINESS OF SCIENCE (Reynal & Hitchcock) would prove a valuable adjunct to the others. As to art—for art, too, ought to be represented—Elie Faure's five volume HISTORY OF ART (Harpers) and Salomon Reinach's APOLLO (Scribners), an illustrated manual of the history of art throughout the ages, would be good selections. Another general survey which it would be well to have on the shelf—in a different field, to be sure—is Weber's HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY (Scribners). And, since I forgot to mention it before I put in here Roget's THESAURUS OF ENGLISH WORDS AND PHRASES (Longmans, Green; Dutton, and others), which should prove a very ready help in trouble to harassed business men and women writing speeches or concocting important epistles.

Ballads

E. L. of Decatur, Indiana, *is to be responsible for a program on the Ballad which the Literature Group of her club is to hold and wishes some books which could be used as a basis for discussion.*

There are three collections which, it seems to me, ought to make drawing up a program an easy matter. These are the famous collection of ENGLISH AND SCOTTISH POPULAR BALLADS (Houghton Mifflin), made years ago by Francis J. Child, and since edited by H. C. Sargent and G. L. Kittredge into a single volume, and Francis B. Gummere's OLD ENGLISH BALLADS (Ginn), both of which have Introductions, notes, and glossary, and the recent excellent collection of AMERICAN BALLADS AND FOLKSONGS (Macmillan), by John A. and Alan Lomax, to which Professor Kittredge has contributed a brief introduction and for which Professor Lomax has supplied running commentary. E. L. with these works could add music to her program, for in many instances the Lomaxes supply the accompaniments to the ballads.

"OLD CURIOSITY SHOP" *By Alex Blum*

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The Compleat Collector

FINE PRINTING: CONDUCTED BY CARL PURINGTON ROLLINS

In alternate weeks this Department is devoted to Rare Books and is conducted by John T. Winterich

Letters of Western Authors

THE Book Club of California, acting upon what seems to me a sound principle, has for two years worked the mines of its native ore. In 1934 it issued a series of reproductions of pictures of California mining towns. The past year it has issued at monthly intervals a series of Letters of Western Authors—Sterling, Harte, Norris, Dana, Muir, Henry George, Miller, Royce, Mark Twain, Clarence King, Sill, and London. Each writer is represented by a facsimile letter, and a comment by some living western author. Each folder has been printed by a different California printer, in typographic style of his own selection. The facsimiles are admirably, and it is to be supposed, accurately done, and supply a fine set of examples of the hand-writing of the authors represented. And the set also furnishes an interesting review of the varied typographic tastes of the California printers.

For the coming year the Club proposes to issue a series of bi-monthly pamphlets containing "minor masterpieces of Pacific Coast literature," with biographical sketches and portraits.

The Book Club of California is an active organization, and its publications have the great virtue of being simple, sensible, and of moderate price.

Two Reprints

ONE MORE SPRING. By Robert Nathan. The Overbrook Press. 1935. *Limited Edition.* $10.

A lovely edition of this recent book has been constructed by Mr. W. A. Dwiggins for publication by Mr. Frank Altschul's Overbrook Press. Set by hand in English Caslon type (still unmatched despite a score or two of "imitations") with one of Mr. Dwiggins's characteristically sparkling title-pages, and gaily bound, the volume has character and charm. There are a liberal number of Mr. Dwiggins's "geometresque" pictures, marking a further advance in his handling of this unique method; and printed in several colors, they add to the gaiety. I wish we had more books as spontaneous as this.

THE BANDITTI OF THE PLAINS. By A. S. Mercer. San Francisco: The Grabhorn Press. 1935. $3.

You can be sure of a well-printed book if it bears the imprint of the Grabhorn Press. And besides, you can be reasonably certain that it will be at the same time sound in craftsmanship and original in design. This account of the Wyoming cattle war of 1892, when the cattle men tried to preëmpt grazing land, is an almost unbelievable tale of American lawlessness and absentee landlordism from Europe, written by A. S. Mercer in 1894, and called by him, in the white-heat of proximity to the event, "the crowning infamy of the ages." Now reprinted, it contains a foreword by a descendant of one of the participants, and a long appendix containing the confession of one of the men involved.

Typographically the book is simply set in that old favorite of the '90's, "antique old style," a forgotten type face which could be used a great deal more than it is. The pictures by Arvilla Parker are well handled in conjunction with the text, and decorative in effect. A good piece of book making.

Something Besides Type

Richard Le Gallienne: "Anarchy in a Library." This little "Fable for Socialists" has been very pleasantly and demurely printed by the Black Cat Press of Chicago for private distribution in an edition of a hundred copies. Le Gallienne's fable misses the target, as clever shots frequently do, but it is pleasant reading, of a mellowness not common now—and it is good to see Le Gallienne reprinted.

Professor James Westfall Thompson (whose work on the Frankfort Book Fair should be familiar to all printers and book lovers) has collected in a small volume issued by the University of California Press ten of his essays on books. The essays are the diversions of a busy historian, and much of the scholarly historian's love of accuracy and dislike of false tradition appears in these delightful pages. "The Mendacity of History" makes salutary reading before seeing the motion picture of "A Tale of Two Cities," while other chapters are more distinctly of and about books. It is a relief to find that some people are still interested in book collecting for its own sake, and not for monetary profit.

One hundred and thirty-one poems previously published only in a limited edition consisting of five hundred copies, now completely exhausted.

Unpublished Poems of

Emily Dickinson

Edited by
MARTHA DICKINSON BIANCHI
and ALFRED LEETE HAMPSON

"This book is but further proof that she is of the immortals . . . She reigns the brightest star in the firmament of American lyric poets. Not only is there no need to say more. There is nothing more to be said."—*Percy Hutchison, N. Y. Times Book Review.*

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Over the Counter

The Saturday Review's Guide to Current Attractions

Trade Mark	*Label*	*Contents*	*Flavor*
THE WIFE TRADER *Arthur Stringer* (Bobbs-Merrill: $2.)	Romantic Adventure	Husband, Tarzan goofy, leaves Park Ave. mate for the land of Eskimos and cute Tooloona. Wifie grits her pearly teeth and sics the blood-hounds northward.	Um good
THIS WAS LIFE *James Weber Linn* (Bobbs-Merrill: $2.)	Novel	When the U. of Chi. was putting on its first long pants. The low-down on campus life, chatter, and education with a murder, elopement, and weepy memories.	Nostalgia
OUTLAW POSSE *Stone Cody* (Morrow: $2.)	Western	Charged with murder and kidnapping, the Maverick Five, outlaws *á la* Robin Hood, catch up with the real killers and,—duck, friends, there's bullets flying.	Straight Whiskey
THE FEUD AT SINGLE SHOT *Luke Short* (Farrar & Rinehart: $2.)	Western	Released from the Big House, two cow-hands hit the straight and narrow, but find the road plenty tough and hard.	Hot Going

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Trade Winds

BY P. E. G. QUERCUS

THE merger of Random House with Smith & Haas, which is to take place on April 1, will bring together two distinguished lists, including such authors as Eugene O'Neill, William Faulkner, André Malraux, Robinson Jeffers, James Joyce, and Evelyn Scott. ☞The officers of the new firm—which is to keep the name Random House—will be Bennett Cerf, president, Robert Haas, vice-president, Donald Klopfer, treasurer, and Harrison Smith, secretary. ☞The merger also involves the Modern Library series, which Mr. Cerf and Mr. Klopfer took over in 1925, two years before they organized Random House. ☞Mr. Haas began his publishing career with the Little Leather Library; he was later, for five years, president of the Book-of-the-Month Club. Mr. Smith was editor of Harcourt, Brace and Co. for seven years, and was a member of the firm of Jonathan Cape and Harrison Smith before the organization of Smith & Haas in 1932. ☞The Quercus Associates drink a toast to the new firm and wish them a double order of good luck.

☞You would think, from reading the article on Doubleday, Doran & Co. in the February *Fortune*, that the entire publishing business, except for the enterprising lads of Garden City, was back in the nineteenth century. "There are other good publishers," *Fortune* admits, "and there are poor ones; but good and poor alike, they adhere to an antiquated publishing tradition."

☞D. D., says *Fortune*, made a profit of $550,000 last year, of which $55,000 was earned by the Trade Department, the rest by other activities with which few other publishers compete: principally non-fiction reprints, mail-order publishing, and the Country Life Press.

☞Nelson Doubleday, according to *Fortune*, may not rate "the proud title of publisher," for he is not bookish; but "he can still look upon himself as the most ingenious merchant of the printed word alive in book publishing today." And further: "It is refreshing to escape from the languidly cliquish bookmosphere of Manhattan's Fourth Avenue to the Doubleday, Doran factory at Garden City." "The one hundred and twenty-odd millions of Americans who never enter a bookstore are not regarded as a potential market by the average publisher, partly because he is too busy trying to have lunch with Alexander Woollcott . . ."

☞This strikes us as a naive way of saying that publishers do much of their work at lunch. There are other ways of applauding D. D.'s success, without misrepresenting the methods of other publishers. In fact, we can remember way back to 1934 when *Fortune* had an article on Simon & Schuster. That article used the same technique as the piece on D. D.—S. & S. were celebrated as outsmarting the rest of the publishing profession. But now, by *Fortune's* implication, S. & S. is on the other side. At least their offices are still on Manhattan's Fourth Avenue.

☞The account of D. D.'s mail order work is good—the most interesting and straightforward section of the piece. And so is the account of the Star Dollar reprints; although *Fortune* gives too little weight to the competition of Blue Ribbon Books. ☞But *Fortune* has spoiled a good piece of reporting by oversimplification.

Minor points:

(1) "Pressman Al Carrota . . . drives his own car to work as does practically everyone else at Garden City."—Something over half of D. D.'s 1474 employees will, we imagine, be glad to hear it. (2) "You will find some of the most respected publishers in New York avowing that they would not handle Bess Streeter Aldrich, on the ground that her novels do not come up to the standard of the firm."—All right: name three. (Incidentally, Bess Streeter Aldrich is not published by Doubleday.) (3) Referring to the famous old case of

(*Continued on next page*)

are you of a
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NATURE?

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MORE FIRST FACTS

By J. N. Kane. An amazing compendium. Worthy successor to "Famous First Facts." 1800 items, 599 pages, 38 illustrations. $2.75. The H. W. Wilson Co., 950 University Ave., New York.

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Trade Winds

(*Continued from preceding page*)

Macy's v. The Publishers, back in 1902, *Fortune* says that Macy's was "amerced" and the publishers' boycott was ordered to disband. But it wasn't Macy's who was "amerced," it was the publishers. *Fortune* probably meant indemnified?

And finally: *Fortune* states that the total profit of Doubleday, Doran & Co. for last year was $550,000. The article goes on to describe the various departments of the company, and to list their separate profits as follows:

Country Life Press.....	$250,000
Trade department	55,000
Mail order departments.....	230,000
Garden City Pub. Co.....	70,000
Doubleday, Doran Book Shops	700
Total....	$605,700

Query: What became of $55,700?

The New Books

(*Continued from page* 18)

lessly thrown off. A really good story could have been got from "The Ghost of the San Mareno Hotel," but Mr. Hecht hasn't got it. "The Boy Pirate" is, on the whole, very dull. "Snowfall in Childhood" is worth the lot.

Everybody knows Mr. Hecht's talents. His versatility is amazing. His horror ideas are those of a twelve-year-old. This isn't one of his best books—but read it for two stories.

W. R. B.

Miscellaneous

THE FLOATING REPUBLIC. By G. E. Manwaring and Bonamy Dobree. Harcourt, Brace. 1936. $3.

Paralyzing the Channel and North Sea Fleets anchored at Spithead and the Nore, the great British naval mutinies of 1797 constitute probably the most famous nautical insurrection in history. No one who reads the story of the uprising, as told in this vigorous book, is likely to forget that it is one of the most dramatic of all true sagas of the sea.

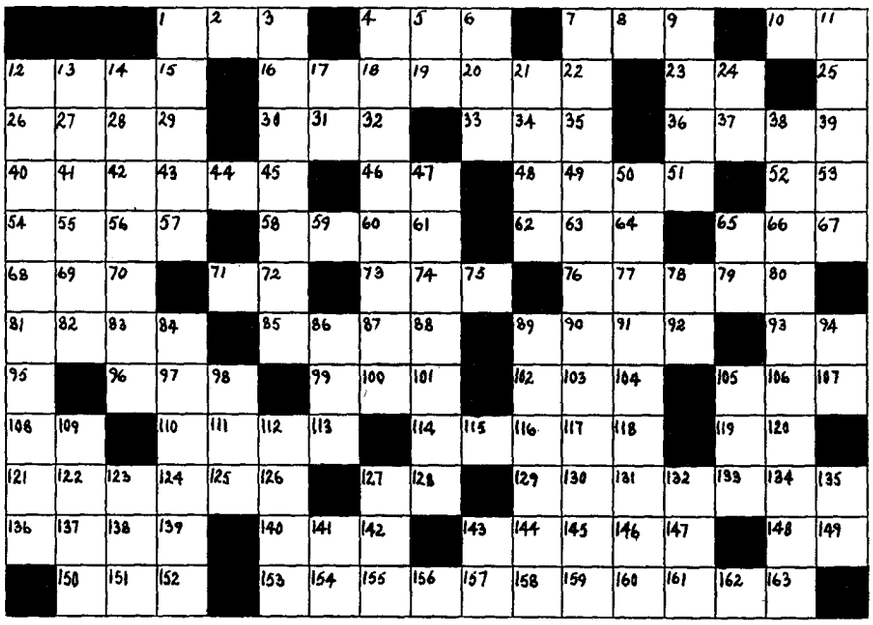
Two centuries of galley-slavery led up to that April day when the crews of the Channel Fleet turned their guns aft and refused to work the ships. The nation was aghast at their mutiny. Today, we should call them strikers, in all save their constant loyalty to King and service. They held out steadfastly against the Lords of the Admiralty, myopic lubbers at Whitehall who might have changed their tune after a sea cruise under a martinet like Captain Bligh of the *Bounty*, or sadist like Captain Pigot of the *Hermione*, in the good old days of naval life under single topsails.

Messrs. Manwaring and Dobree, after painstaking research, have written a tense and exciting book which will be the standard authority on the mutinies and their causes. Here is the whole hurly-burly pageant of Britain's bluff-bowed hell-ships in revolt, ending in gala days at Spithead and bitter tragedy at the Nore. The book is admirably documented and illustrated, and we can recommend it to all followers of the sea or social progress.

W. D.

Double-Crostics: No. 98

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY



DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle, you must guess twenty-six words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Unless otherwise indicated, the author is English or American.

The solution of last week's *Double-Crostic* will be found on page 14 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
I. Separates, sifts.	110 54 69 83 124 7 152
II. To redouble or repeat.	151 94 25 142 85 17 31 42 58 27
III. Abraham's nephew.	63 82 158
IV. Succulent.	145 68 87 123
V. Ancient Greek inhabitant of Italy.	103 140 96 75 34 148 1
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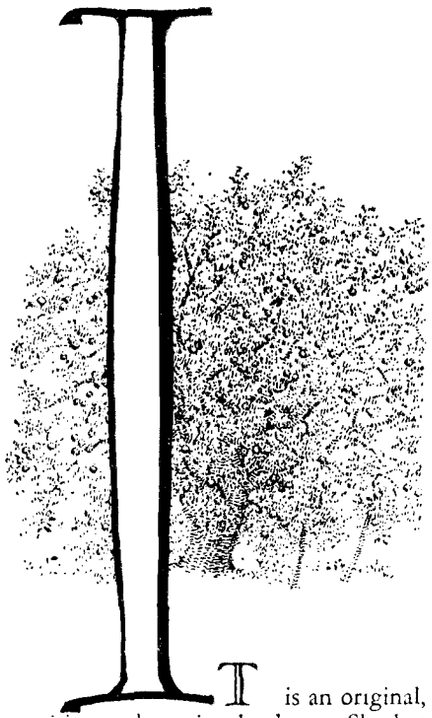

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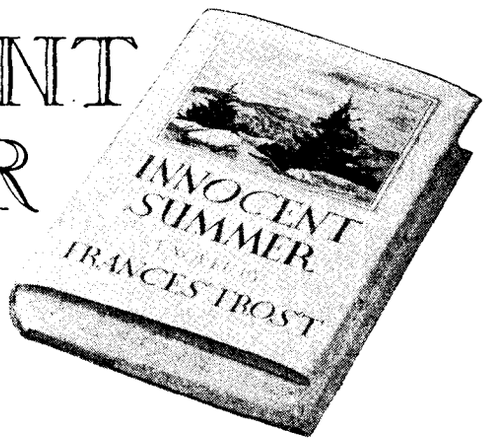

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